PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

REPORT OF DEBATES

Thursday 16 April 2026

REVISED EDITION

Contents

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The President, **Mr Farrell**, took the chair at 10.00 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People and read Prayers.

NOTICE OF QUESTION

Macquarie Point Stadium - P90 Assessment

[10.07 a.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR - Mr President, I give notice that I shall ask the Leader for the Government: in relation to the proposed Macquarie Point stadium, at the time of writing the letter to the member for Elwick in December last year, the letter that was tabled in this place, did an industry standard P90 cost assessment exist?

Mr PRESIDENT - Can the member provide a copy of the question?

Ms O'CONNOR - I will email it across.

Ms FORREST - Point of order: to be clear, I understand that questions on notice need to be sent to the Clerks and prepared in advance. I ask the member for Hobart, was that intended to be a question without notice this afternoon?

Ms O'Connor - No, it's a question on notice.

Ms FORREST - Maybe the President can provide advice on that.

Mr PRESIDENT - It is meant to be tabled when it's asked.

Ms O'Connor - I will go straightaway.

Mr PRESIDENT - That's the Standing Order. Otherwise, you might like to submit it when you have a copy to present.

Ms O'Connor - This is Notices of Question time. I have a handwritten copy of the question. It's now on the record. I seek your advice on how that could not be appropriate.

Mr PRESIDENT - No, the practice is, and the Standing Orders stipulate, that the copy of the question be presented to the Table.

Ms O'Connor - I'm just about to do that.

Mr PRESIDENT - Right, we'll allow you to that. We will wait.

Mr Duigan - Why would we do that?

Ms O'Connor - Because it's permissible within the Standing Orders.

Mr PRESIDENT - Order, we won't debate across the -

Mr Duigan - That's why we have the procedure.

Mr GAFFNEY - Point of order, Mr President. I have the highest regard for all the members in this place, but I also have the highest regard for proper processes, and I don't believe this is a proper process. Therefore, I will call on you to make a judgement and a ruling to see if the member's questions could be asked a later time or in a more appropriate manner, but this is not correct.

Mr PRESIDENT - I thank the member for Mersey for drawing that to my attention.

> Standing Order No. 46. New question given
>
> Notice of Question shall be given by the Member when the President calls for Notices of Question, by stating its terms to the Council and delivering at the Table two signed copies of such Notice, and showing the day he or she proposes to ask such Question.

There is a time limit and if it can't be done in the next 30 seconds, then it will have to be done according to standard procedures and our parliamentary practices at the next sitting of the session.

In answer to your question, member for Mersey, it is out of order.

UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA (PROTECTION OF LAND) BILL 2025 (No. 58)

Third Reading

Bill read the third time.

GRANGE RESOURCES (TASMANIA) PTY LTD (ALTERNATIVE APPLICATION PERIOD) BILL 2026 (No. 3)

Second Reading

[10.13 a.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre - Leader for the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I move -

> That the bill be read a second time.

The mining and mineral processing sector remains an important component of Tasmania's economy. It supports more than 5600 direct jobs across the state and makes a substantial contribution to regional communities and to government revenue. The sector also continues to drive skills development, technological advancement and innovation, all of which deliver broader benefits for Tasmania.

Mining has long formed part of Tasmania's economic and industrial foundation. From early mineral use prior to European settlement, through the gold discoveries of the mid-19th century and the development of the tin industry, mining has played a significant role in the state's development. That contribution has continued through long-established operations such

as Renison, Rosebery and Mount Lyell, all in the member for Murchison's wonderful electorate. Tasmania's mining sector therefore reflects both historical continuity and contemporary economic relevance.

One of the state's most significant mineral assets is the Savage River iron ore deposit. The deposit was first recognised in the 17th century through magnetic anomalies observed off the north-west coast, with further identification occurring in the late 19th century. Development commenced in the 1960s. Today, the operation is owned and operated by Grange Resources, producing a low-impurity magnetic product that is highly regarded in international steel markets. Grange Resources is recognised as an experienced vertically integrated iron ore mining and pellet production company with its corporate headquarters located in Burnie. The Savage River operation has contributed to Tasmania's economy since 1967 and currently produces approximately 2.5 million tonnes of pellets per annum. As global steel markets increasingly focus on lower-emissions production, Tasmania's high-quality iron ore positions the state well within evolving international supply chains.

The continuation of this contribution depends on Grange's ability to invest in and adapt its operations over time. Central to this is the provision of sufficient long-term certainty to support major capital investment. The Savage River Mine currently supports around 700 jobs and has returned an average of $19.5 million per year in royalties over the past five years, providing an ongoing public benefit.

The current mine life is projected to extend to at least 2040, with Grange proposing further investment to maintain and extend that horizon. A significant component of this proposal is the transition of the north pit from open cut mining to an underground block caving operation. This approach is intended to reduce operating cost, minimise additional surface disturbance, lower emissions and extend mine life. However, it requires substantial upfront capital investment, of which access to finance is contingent upon lease tenure certainty extending beyond the existing term.

This bill is intended to address that constraint. It provides a limited and one-off mechanism for Grange to apply for early renewal of its mining leases, thereby offering investors the level of certainty sought for long-term financing. The proposed development, which may involve investment of up to $1.2 billion, would support continued operations, improve productivity and reduce emissions, while maintaining Tasmania's position in the global iron ore and steel supply.

Grange is also pursuing a range of decarbonisation initiatives. These include electrification of parts of the mining fleet and underground equipment, as well as modifications at the Port Latta pelletising plant to reduce reliance on coal. Collectively, these measures had the potential to significantly reduce emissions over time, with targets consistent with Tasmania's broader climate objectives.

Employment is expected to be maintained through the transition period. Workforce numbers may increase during construction of the underground mine before declining gradually from around 2030 as open cut operations are reduced. Grange has indicated its intention, where possible, to redeploy employees within its operations, thereby supporting workforce stability.

Under the current legislative framework, mining leases may only be renewed shortly before expiry. Grange's aligned leases do not expire until November 2031, and there is presently no mechanism to allow for earlier renewal.

Despite detailed engagement with the Department of State Growth, financiers have expressed that the existing lease term does not adequately align with the proposed investment timeframe.

I'm advised that without the passage of this bill that financing arrangements will not be able to proceed, placing at risk the long-term viability of the operation and the associated economic benefits. That outcome would have significant implications for the north-west and west coast regions, as well as for Tasmania more broadly. This bill represents a targeted response to a specific investment constraint. It seeks to support long-term employment, provide certainty for major private investment and enable the continued operation of a significant Tasmanian resource project, while leaving intact the usual statutory assessment processes.

I commend the bill to the Council.

[10.21 a.m.]

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - Mr President, I - surprisingly, if not - rise to speak in support of the bill, and I do so as the member for Murchison, the electorate that is the home to the Savage River Mine and Port Latta pellet plant and port facility. This mine and pelletising plant are real economic assets to my community, and to the many people who are engaged, not only directly in the business there but indirectly as well.

I must say at this point, it's also a relief to be debating a bill that is not controversial or divisive. It's a welcome change, I might say. I also appreciate the Leader and the Deputy Leader listening to my request to actually try to progress this bill in a timely manner because these things matter and there is a time imperative, and I'll come to that.

The Port Latta pellet plant and the Savage River mine: these facilities are the backbone of communities across the north-west coast and the livelihoods of hundreds of Tasmanian families. Grange is one of the largest employers in my electorate with, as the Leader indicated, around 700 direct employees. That's a significant business. A lot of these employees are highly paid employees. They're not low-paid employees, a lot of them, which makes a big difference to a regional community like mine.

This is a relatively simple piece of legislation that does something very specific. It allows Grange Resources to apply for renewal of its mining lease earlier than the current statutory window permits and that's all it does. It doesn't grant renewal. It does not bypass the rigorous assessment process that any renewal application must satisfy under the *Mineral Resources Development Act 1995*. What it does is resolve a genuine and significant problem that sits at the intersection of project finance and regulatory timing - a problem that, if left unaddressed, could place one of Tasmania's most important long-term industrial investments at risk. That's the risk and that's why we need to proceed with it and why I'm pleased that the Leader and the government have agreed to bring this forward today.

I will just explain why this matters so directly to my electorate. Grange Resources has been operating Savage River more than 57 years. This is a remarkable record of sustained resource extraction, regional employment and economic contribution to a part of Tasmania that

has few comparable anchors. It's had a number of owners over that period and I know the current owners, as the Leader stated, have their head corporate office in Burnie. This is the only one I'm aware of, probably pretty much anywhere, that has its corporate office in a regional town like Burnie, and that is very significant.

Grange Resources takes workplace safety and environmental management very seriously in the undertaking of this extractive work. The Savage River mine and the pipeline to the Port Latta pellet plant and port facility together represent an integrated operation that is genuinely unique in Australian iron ore production. Grange is Australia's most experienced magnetite producer, and the premium quality iron ore pellets produced at Port Latta are exported throughout the Asia-Pacific region. This is a Tasmanian industry operating on a global stage.

The workforce directly employed across these operations, and many more employed through contracting and supply chains, live in communities across the north-west: in Burnie, Wynyard, Waratah, Rosebery and surrounding townships, as well as further across the north-west. When I speak in this place about the economic fabric of the north-west, Grange Resources is always part of that story. It pays good wages; it supports local businesses; it sustains families and contributes to the tax and royalty base that funds public services for all Tasmanians. It also takes, as I said, environmental management very seriously.

I remember being on a mining site some years ago where the Tasmanian devils are around and the Tasmanian devils take priority on site. If a Tasmanian devil walks across the road and there's a mining truck going up - all the trucks have cameras front and back - the truck has to stop. That's it. The devil takes priority, as it should. They're only tiny little things and these are very big trucks. They've also undertaken significant work in dealing with legacy environmental issues, even though that's not their legacy issue as such, they're current owners, but they are dealing with a lot of those legacy environmental issues of acid drainage and the like.

Now Grange is at a pivotal moment. The company is proposing a transition from open-cut to underground mining, a substantial and technically complex undertaking that will require total investment in the order of $1.3 billion. That's a significant investment in a regional part of Tasmania. Approximately $600 million of that is proposed to come from debt financing, with a further $500-600 million from the company's own equity, including existing cash reserves and operating cash flows generated during the construction period.

The underground block cave operation is expected to be fully operational by 2031, extending the productive life of the mine and unlocking all resources that are currently not accessible. This is exactly the kind of long-term private investment that Tasmania needs to attract and retain. It is an investment that will secure jobs not just for a few years but for a future generation. It will reduce carbon emissions relative to the current open-cut operation and it will keep a skilled Tasmanian workforce employed in technically sophisticated mining activities. It will continue to generate the royalties, payroll tax and economic activity that flow to the broader economy.

However, this is not only a story about jobs and investment, as important as they are, it's also a story about decarbonisation. Now, a lot of people don't see mining and decarbonisation in the same sentence, but this is one. It's about a Tasmanian company pursuing one of the most ambitious emissions reduction trajectories in Australia's mining history. I know Ben Maynard, the chief operating officer at Grange Resources, personally and greatly respect him. Ben and I have known each other for a very long time. In fact, I was the midwife when he and his wife

had their babies. He has been instrumental in progressing the decarbonisation of this business. Those who know Ben would identify - he's like the Energizer bunny. He has more energy than I've ever seen in anybody. Grange Resources, under Ben's leadership, formally began its structured journey toward net zero in 2022, adopting the World Economic Forum's ESG framework and publishing its first baseline report in August of that year. They've been a leader in this.

The company set itself a clear objective to understand its emissions profile and create the focused pathway needed to sustainably reduce it. This pathway has since been developed into concrete milestones: a halving of carbon emissions by 2030 and net zero by 2035. That's an ambitious target. These are not aspirational targets from Grange's perspective that they hold loosely, they are targets with an engineering foundation. The definitive feasibility study for the underground transition confirmed an 80 per cent reduction in carbon emissions at the Savage River mine through the application of electric mining equipment and underground material handling systems.

The underground operation will replace diesel-intensive open-cut haulage with electrified systems, recover heat in the pellet plant, reduce reliance on natural gas, and substantially reduce the surface disturbance and energy demands associated with open-cut extraction. In short, the investment this bill will unlock is not simply the continuation of an existing operation, it's the transformation of that operation into something materially cleaner, more efficient and more sustainable. The underground mine is the mechanism by which Grange achieves its net-zero commitment. I know this was a question asked by the member for Nelson in the briefing: what happens if they don't get the funding or don't do it? That just blows out of the water their ambition for net zero.

This matters for Tasmania, it matters for the world actually. We have a legitimate claim to being a clean-energy jurisdiction and our industrial base should reflect that ambition. An operation at Savage River that achieves net zero by 2030, producing premium green pellets for steel markets across the Asia-Pacific region is an operation that Tasmania can point to with genuine pride. It aligns with where the global steel industry is heading and positions Grange, and by extension the north-west, competitively in a market that is increasingly demanding low-emissions inputs. The financing this bill enables is therefore not just about keeping your mind open, it's about funding a transition to a mine that Tasmania and Grange Resources can hold up as a model of responsible, long-term resource extraction and what that looks like in a decarbonising world.

Here is the problem that the bill addresses: Grange's current mining lease expires in November 2031. The proposed debt facility, whether from the Commonwealth government funding agencies or commercial bank lenders, has a tenure of between seven and ten years. Under the modelling, debt repayment is projected to be completed by 2038. That means that the debt extends well beyond the current lease expiry. From a lender's perspective, this is not a risk they will accept. No financier would commit hundreds of millions of dollars to a project where the legal right to mine could expire while the debt is still outstanding. The security that underpins this entire financing structure depends on there being certainty of lease tenure beyond the loan term.

I have been informed by Ben that this is not a theoretical concern; it's a real concern. Multiple lenders have explicitly flagged that lease expiry as a critical hurdle. Despite the government letters of support, and I do acknowledge that the government have provided letters

of support, and despite the well-understood regulatory process for lease renewal, lenders require certainty. I can understand that, particularly in the current global situation we're facing. Lenders require this before they will issue term sheets, before they will commit credit approvals, and thus before Grange can make its final investment decision. I did have a conversation with Ben earlier this week. I can't remember what day it was. I don't know what today is, actually.

Ms Rattray - It's Thursday.

Ms FORREST - It's Thursday, right. It might have been Tuesday then. He said that they're hoping to get to FID by May. This is why I think it's important that we're dealing with this now, because we don't sit again until the middle of May. Under the current provisions of the *Mineral Resources Development Act 1995*, section 96 limits applications for lease renewal to the window of three months before and one month after lease expiry. This has been in place for a long time, I know, but it does seem an extraordinarily short timeframe, even in circumstances where issues such as the one Grange currently faces don't exist. I'm sure that's for a good reason, but it just does seem like an extraordinarily narrow window.

What it means is that under existing law, Grange could not apply for renewal until August 2031 at the earliest, but at that point the financing window will have closed. The final investment decision will have been made or not. I think it's pretty clear I want it to be made, and I'm sure Ben Maynard does as well, and the whole of the company. If the lease uncertainty remains unresolved, the investment decision will not be made and the underground transition will not proceed. This would be a serious loss to the business and to Tasmania. This bill provides a straightforward solution. It allows Grange to apply now, approximately five years ahead of the statutory window, so that renewal assessment can be completed and the lease extended before lenders are required to commit their funds.

I also want to state what this does and does not mean. I think it's important that it's clear. It does not grant an automatic extension. Grange would still be required to demonstrate that it meets all statutory criteria for renewal under the act. A full assessment process applies. The minister retains their decision-making role. The protections that exist in the legislation to ensure responsible mining, environmental accountability and community interest are preserved in their entirety. It does not change any of that assessment or process. What changes is simply the timing of when the application can be lodged. The timing change is what makes a difference between a $1.3 billion investment proceeding or not.

I also want to note, for the record, the nature of the renewal being sought. The background material provided to members references a 20-year extension from 2031 to 2051. However, as I understand the approach Grange is taking, consistent with a maximum renewal period permitted under the act, they will be applying for a 20-year extension from the point of application, which will be this year obviously if this goes through, which brings the lease to approximately 2046.

I believe this is an appropriate approach. It's consistent with all other mine lease extensions, the maximum of 20 years. Grange will apply for 20 years. It's up to Mineral Resources Tasmania and the minister ultimately to determine the length of that lease, but I believe this approach is sufficient to satisfy the lender requirements. It also leaves open the possibility of demonstrating further operational life beyond the horizon, which the substantial

remaining mineral resource, some 360 million tonnes in total, with significant volumes in both the north pit and centre pit, suggest is genuinely plausible.

I'm conscious that this is targeted legislation applying to a specific company and a specific lease. We should always carefully consider legislation so targeted and narrow in its application. This not a criticism, but it is sometimes entirely appropriate for the parliament to act with such precision to resolve a well-defined problem that broader legislation cannot address in time and effectively is prohibited under our current act.

As I stated earlier, I think this very short window for renewal should be reviewed to ensure it remains appropriate and contemporary to meet the principles of mining lease renewals, and that's something I haven't bothered to pursue at this point. I don't know if the leader can add anything to that, if it is something that's being looked at. It does seem like quite an extraordinary short timeframe when you've got mines that have been existing for a long time and still have a lot of resource, but there may be situations arising like this; but rather than needing a bespoke piece of legislation, here we are. That is a separate body of work and will take some time, I'm sure, to complete, but I do ask if it is being considered.

In this case the alternative - doing nothing and watching a generational investment decision default to no because of a regulatory timing mismatch - in my view, is not acceptable, not to me and I hope not to any other member of this Chamber who understands what Savage River and Port Latta mean to the north-west of Tasmania and to the state. I've seen the employment data. I know these operations and what they contribute. I know many of the workers and their families, and I know the communities that depend on the ongoing operation of this mine, not just for today's jobs but for the jobs that their children might hold in the future in an underground operation on a world-class scale. It will require new skills as they decarbonise this mine. It's a whole new future of employment there.

This request and subsequent decision have not been made in haste. Grange has engaged extensively with the Commonwealth and state agencies, with potential financiers and obviously with the regulatory framework. The company has been transparent about its financing requirements and structural challenge posed by the lease timing. The independent technical expert review being undertaken for potential lenders is examining the technical, economic, environmental and social dimensions of the project.

The rigour that underpins this financing process is, I believe, relevant to the confidence we can have in what's being proposed. As part of the debt-servicing arrangements, lenders have commissioned an independent technical expert review of the north pit underground project. This is a demanding, lender-driven assessment that examines the technical-economic environment and social dimensions of the project independently of anything Grange itself has produced. It builds on the substantial foundation of a pre-feasibility study completed in 2021 that established the viability of underground mining at north pit followed by the definitive feasibility study completed in 2023. That confirmed feasibility using a combination of block-cave and sub-level-cave mining methods. That body of work, now being independently verified for lenders, represents years of rigorous analysis and on-the-ground investigation, including more than three kilometres of exploration decline already developed underground.

It's not like they've been sitting doing nothing. They've already done a lot of this work. I've said this before: in the mining industry, you sink a lot of money into the ground before you pull any out, and that's exactly what they're doing here. This review is expected to conclude in

the second quarter of this year and financing is expected to follow. In my conversation with Ben on Tuesday, it was he's hoping to get to FID in May. What this tells us is the project is not at an early stage or speculative stage. It is a mature, well-documented and technically credible project. The lease certainty this bill provides is the final piece of that puzzle. Without it, even the project that passes every technical, economic and environmental test cannot proceed to finance. This bill removes that barrier. To be clear, this is a serious proposal, backed by serious analysis, seeking a reasonable legislative accommodation of a genuine financing constraint.

I also note Grange is not asking the people of Tasmania for money to undertake this critical work. They are not looking for a handout or financial assistance. We see so many people with a hand out asking for government money. This is not what Grange are doing. In fact, they're giving money to us by way of their payroll tax, their royalties, and that will continue and possibly increase. There's a lot of really high-quality ore under the ground there.

The company is seeking support to commence a lease renewal process earlier than currently possible to meet the very real opportunity to borrow funds needed to ensure the life of this mine and progress their ambitious decarbonisation of their operations. It's a good news story. Getting this right matters enormously to me, not that I matter, but also to the people of Murchison and the broader north-west coast and to Tasmania's long-term economic future.

I fully support the bill and I hope other members do, too.

[10.41 a.m.]

Mr HISCUTT (Montgomery) - Mr President. Just a very short note to put my support for this on the record. As a neighbour electorate to Murchison, I know many people who have either spent time at, or are working in, Savage River or Port Latta. Workers in my region are highly affected by this mine and how it continues to operate. I won't go into detail, but as was discussed, all this does is allow them to apply for the lease without having to wait another five years. They are a good corporate citizen and this allows them to continue into the future. I wanted to add my support.

Ms ARMITAGE (Launceston) - Mr President, I, too, support this bill. I really appreciated the letter from Ben Maynard, the chief operating officer, along with the briefing papers that he provided. I think the reasons for supporting the bill have been fairly clearly outlined by the member for Murchison. Obviously, any lender needs certainty, which makes a lot of sense. I also noticed that the Savage River mine, which Grange Resources owns and runs, has been mined since the 1960s, with the project starting in 1967. It's certainly been a long period of time that it's been going.

As Ben Maynard says in his letter to us, 'prospective lenders have made it clear that they cannot support a major underground investment while a lease tenure expires before debt repayment', which is common sense. 'Without early renewal, Grange cannot proceed with the project required to maintain operations beyond the current open pit life. Proposed underground transition is intended to secure continuity of operations employment', which we know is extremely important, particularly in the west coast - or anywhere in Tasmania, but especially the north-west and west coast, 'and economic activity in Tasmania's north-west, while moving to a lower impact mining method. Early application for renewal is an enabling step, not a determination on any future approval.' As I said, providing the concise briefing paper is very useful, so I have no problem supporting the bill.

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre - Leader for the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I appreciate the support from members, particularly the contribution from the member for Murchison. I think I learnt more out of your speech than I did out of the one that I presented.

Ms Forrest - Happy to help.

Ms RATTRAY - I actually sent her a message and said, 'That was a pretty good speech.' We know that the member for Murchison knows her electorate and her businesses very well. That was very much appreciated. Apparently there's general support around the Chamber, which is very heartening.

In response to the member for Murchison's question, there is a review underway of the *Mineral Resources Development Act*, and it is looking at the renewal of mining leases and the timing to make sure it meets contemporary industry requirements, as you rightly outlined. That review is expected to be provided to the government by the end of this year. Again, I thank members for their support.

Bill read the second time.

GRANGE RESOURCES (TASMANIA) PTY LTD (ALTERNATIVE APPLICATION PERIOD) BILL 2026 (No. 3)

In Committee

Clauses 1 to 3 agreed to.

Clauses 4 to 6 agreed to.

Clauses 7 and 8 agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment.

[10.48 a.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre - Leader for the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I move -

That the third reading of the bill be made an order of the day for tomorrow.

Motion agreed to.

RESIDENTIAL PARKS BILL 2026 (No. 2)

Second Reading

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre - Leader for the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I move -

That the sitting be adjourned until the ringing of the division bells.

Can I do that?

Ms Forrest - No, you have to do a second reading speech.

Ms RATTRAY - Mr President, I move -

That the second reading debate be adjourned.

I am going to seek the House's approval to head to agreement.

Mr GAFFNEY - I am not sure if I am doing the right thing, probably not.

Mr PRESIDENT - On the debate stand adjourned, you're entitled to speak.

Mr GAFFNEY - It's probably not that issue; if the debate is going to stand adjourned, do I then get a chance to raise a point of order?

Debate adjourned.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

[10.50 a.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre - Leader for the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I move -

That the sitting be suspended until the ringing of the division bells.

This is for the purpose of a briefing on the Residential Parks Bill.

Mr GAFFNEY (Mersey) - Thank you, Mr President. I've noticed on the order of business for today that it goes to Residential Parks and that's the last thing on today. I just think that there needs to be an explanation here for people listening in the outside world - they're expecting the debate regarding the greyhounds to continue, and that hasn't been clear and it hasn't been mentioned, so I think for all those people tuned in, in Tasmania, Australia and elsewhere, there needs to be something on the record about what's happening, because it's not on our order of business. I'd ask that the Leader, the parliament and this House think about how that can be projected.

Mr PRESIDENT - I understand the honourable member's concern and it's the business of the government. The government are responsible for letting members, let alone the wider

world, know what we're doing today. So, I imagine the honourable Leader will take that on board.

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre - Leader for the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I completely understand that this has not panned out the way that the honourable members expected it to, and I can say that's true for all the members, myself included. We do have another piece of legislation for us to deal with, but there will possibly be some more comment on the other one that was potentially to progress today. I will leave some comment to that.

Mr PRESIDENT - A contribution on the suspension? It's not a debate, but a contribution.

[10.52 a.m.]

Ms THOMAS (Elwick) - Thank you, Mr President. I'm not happy that the House be suspended now. I agree with the member for Mersey that we ought to be continuing on today with exactly what we came here, as members in this place, prepared and expecting to do according to the sitting schedule that had been provided to honourable members, to debate the greyhound bill today. When we adjourned here at 11 o'clock last night, that's what we were coming back to do. We had no notice, as members in this place, that it was the government's intention to pull this from the sitting schedule, and that is not acceptable. As elected people representing the people of Tasmania, we need to be prepared for what we are coming to represent them on in this place, and we cannot be expected to be prepared on this bill that we are suspending for a briefing on.

I appreciate that we will have a briefing, but we cannot be fully prepared when our heads were here coming back in to debate the greyhound bill. There was an expectation in the community, a lot of people on both sides of this debate, who want to see this resolved and deserve for it to be resolved today. For the government to not explain to the people, or to us as elected members, shows complete disrespect for this House and for us as members - complete disrespect. Not even an email. We got in here, had a look at the Notice Paper, and some of us might have noticed there was something missing. Greyhounds isn't on the list. What a surprise. All I can find is a media publication on the *Pulse Tasmania* website: 'Tasmanian government delays greyhound racing ban vote to avoid upper House defeat'. It appears the government doesn't have a message for the House, so perhaps this is all we can rely on. It says:

> The Tasmanian government has pulled its greyhound racing ban bill from debate this week, conceding it does not yet have the numbers to get it through the Legislative Council.
>
> The bill needed the support of three of the five undecided upper house independents to pass. It is understood debate will now be pushed back to the next sitting in mid-May.
>
> …
>
> The legislation would shut the industry down by June 30, 2029, with an immediate ban on breeding greyhounds for racing and a prohibition on euthanising healthy dogs.

> The bill cleared the House of Assembly in December and was amended earlier this year to include a $4.8 million compensation package for industry participants.
>
> If passed, Tasmania would become the first Australian state to outlaw the sport, following the ACT's 2018 ban.
>
> Crossbench concerns have centred on the lack of industry consultation before the bill was tabled, the speed of the transition, and the welfare of dogs and workers caught up in the wind-down.

Thanks, *Pulse*, for informing elected members in this place, as to why the government has decided to pull the bill because it's realised it probably doesn't have the numbers to get it through. It's just not acceptable, so I'm not happy to suspend for a briefing. I think this House ought to continue on with its business that we were expected to do when we left this place last night, that we had a duty, and the government has a duty, to the people of Tasmania to do what it said it would do. Again, same old pattern. Changing its mind, backflipping, another kick in the guts to the industry that is sitting on a knife-edge waiting for the outcome of this decision. They just want to know. It is entirely unfair. I don't support the suspension here.

Mr PRESIDENT - The question is that the sitting be suspended until the ringing of the division bells. I've allowed a bit of latitude, but if members can stick to that or refer back to that.

[10.56 a.m.]

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - I appreciate the latitude you're providing here, because I share a lot of the concerns raised by the member for Elwick on this. There was a whisper in the corridors after the briefing this morning - two briefings, one on greyhounds and one on the Grange bill we've just dealt with - that this wasn't being proceeded with. I thought, surely if I'd known that last night, I wouldn't have got up and spoken last night. I would have waited to actually fully consider more of the matters.

Clearly, this decision that's been made by way of a piece of paper on our seats when we came in, I agree with the member for Elwick, is so disrespectful. This is how the industry feels. They feel disrespected by the Premier, disrespected by the government. I look at the minister, actually, at the Deputy Leader, because it's he who's responsible for this in this House. I know he doesn't determine all the orders of business, but he's the one who has brought this bill in and now lets it sit with huge pressures on people in my community and other communities around the state who just want to know which way it's going.

Now, to presume that they know how this House is going to vote, to pull it because they fear it may not see favour, shows that this is entirely about politics. This is not about animal welfare. This is not about the welfare of participants. It's about politics. How disgraceful. It's pure politics, because if animal welfare matters, if the breeding flurry of activity and all the stimulation of ovulation - we've seen all the bitches out in there in the system - is real, then what is the government saying? They're saying, well, let's just defer it off to May or sometime. That's budget week; we're into the budget session. It is pure politics and it is disrespectful to every member in this place regardless of where they stand.

I still don't genuinely know where I'm going to stand, but this makes me very frustrated and I feel that this is about politics, not about good policy. I fear, and I know, that members like me, like all the members who haven't spoken in this House, will now be put under extraordinary pressure from both sides, as if we haven't had enough of that already. I spoke at the end of my contribution last night about how I don't want to be coerced - and I feel I have been coerced by some members in this place and some people in the community on both sides. I have had some very respectful emails from people this morning saying that they really appreciated my contribution last night, which is nice. I really do appreciate those people who have done that. The comment - wherever you land, your decision, we will respect you - I really, really sincerely appreciate that, which is far more than the respect this government is showing us.

Now, I am not ready for the Residential Parks Bill. I did start looking at that. I thought, well, we're just not going to have time to get to it. Thankfully we started at 10 a.m. today for the purpose of dealing with the Grange bill; I'm absolutely grateful. I really appreciate that, as does my community; but here we are, at the normal starting time. We could have started on the greyhounds by now. We could have gone through it. Yes, it would have been a long day, but it would have given certainty. To have it through the media - through *Pulse Tasmania* - I haven't checked my emails. Is there an email to us?

Ms Thomas - No email. It's just by omission on the Notice Paper.

Ms FORREST - How does the Premier think this is a normal and respectful way of dealing with anybody - members or the community? I won't oppose the suspension for a briefing, but the government needs to take a good hard look at itself and rethink this decision, because this is some of the worst playing of politics I have seen in my time here.

[11.01 a.m.]

Ms O'CONNOR (Hobart) - Mr President, I certainly understand the frustration of members who want to continue with debate on the greyhound racing phase-out legislation. I , too, would love to be able to continue with the debate, and for the evidence to lead to support for the bill, but I'm surprised that the member for Murchison has taken such offence. There are a number of serious and detailed questions that the member for Murchison put on the record last night that can't be answered within a short space of time; details, for example, about any potential impact on the state budget of phasing out greyhound racing.

I've heard plenty of criticism of government that this legislation has been rushed. Well, here we've been given a pause in order to allow the government to provide the information that has been requested by a number of members. I think it's sensible to delay debate. On any number of issues and any number of bills from time to time, a decision is made not to bring that legislation on. This is a matter that is of great interest in the community. I don't like talking about sides. Across the community, this issue is of great interest.

With respect, in response to the member for Murchison saying that we're going to be put under more pressure, well, that's part of our job. It is part of our job to be responsive to community concerns. It's part of our job to be lobbied by stakeholders and constituents. It's not just a part of our job; it's a privilege, so I don't mind being put under pressure, whether it's by industry representatives or animal justice advocates, because I have the privilege of being in here representing the people of Hobart, and with that comes the responsibility to listen. I want to address -

Mr PRESIDENT - I will just remind members: this is about suspending -

Ms O'CONNOR - The seeking of leave. No, that's right. I understand.

Mr PRESIDENT - If we can keep it very tight.

Ms O'CONNOR - Thank you. I'm speaking to the question of suspension. A number of matters were just raised by the member for Murchison with fairly free rein, Mr President.

The word 'coercion' was used. It's a very serious charge to level at someone that they've tried to 'coerce' you into doing something you really don't want to do, and I reject that, because although no-one was named, everybody in this place knows who that was referring to, and I reject it absolutely. I've never tried to coerce anyone into doing anything in my life. My job in here is to try to persuade people.

Finally, before I sit down, there's another very serious matter that arose last night. Yesterday, members were provided with a confidential briefing by the Tasmanian Racing Integrity Commissioner.

Mr PRESIDENT - This is about another matter, so you can't - this is just about the sitting being suspended. I've allowed a lot of latitude with that, but you can't introduce another matter into that debate.

Ms O'CONNOR - It's a very connected matter that brings the reputation of this Council and the trust in this Council to receive confidential information into disrepute.

Mr PRESIDENT - I would ask that the topic be suspended until the ringing of the bells.

Ms O'CONNOR - I sometimes worry that there are different rules applied in this place, but it is not unreasonable for government to delay debate on this bill. It is not an unreasonable response to an issue of such seriousness and such consequence for sensitive, gentle animals like greyhounds.

None of this is ideal, not for industry participants or people who are deeply concerned that for every day this industry continues, gentle, sensitive, loving dogs are being maimed and killed. This is no trivial piece of legislation on which debate has been delayed. It has very significant consequence and therefore time should be put into answering the questions that were asked by members.

Mr PRESIDENT - I'm really reluctant to allow other members to speak, but I have allowed other members, but this is really about the suspension of the sitting to allow for a briefing. Please members, keep as close to that as you can.

[11.06 a.m.]

Mr HISCUTT (Montgomery) - Mr President, this is coming from the parties that wanted this debate in December now saying they want more time. We're not suspending the debate on this issue that we were discussing last night because of lack of information. We're suspending it because of lack of support. We've had 16 briefings on this issue. It should continue and I don't support the suspension of this session, because we should be debating a bill that we expected to debate.

[11.07 a.m.]

Mr EDMUNDS (Pembroke) - Mr President, I appreciate the comments you've made, but I also don't really feel like our place in the speaking order on this should really impact what we're able to say. The member for Murchison talked about how disrespectful this is. I've still got the badge that says respect belongs in this workforce. Absolutely no respect has been shown to members in the conduct of this and any argument that's made by the government or government spokespeople hasn't been made until this has started.

We came in here at 10.00 a.m. We had a draft schedule that said that we should be prepared to sit late last night, and tonight people have booked accommodation. People have said goodbye to their children or their partners or their families, saying we will be in for a long one. The entire community expectation is that we would deal with that today.

There are people being left in limbo on both sides of this argument. I worry for the mental health of those people who are going to be waiting until at least May 19 and possibly August to get their result. Animal welfare, livelihoods, they're all at stake. Process has been thrown out the window. This is so weak. Who's pulling the strings on this?

This whole bill, I was going to argue, should the bells have been ringing, and you've probably just finished the prayer and would be getting into it on any other sitting day, is built on foundations of quicksand. Well, here we go, this is another example of that. People behind this should have a look in the mirror and if they're not looking in the mirror, they can look in their smartphone.

The expectation in this community is that we are going to deal with this one way or another. I don't support this suspension. Whom does it serve? It doesn't serve the advocates. It doesn't serve the community. It certainly doesn't serve this place. It really only serves the Premier and his Greens puppeteers on the crossbench. The tail, pardon the expression, is wagging the dog. I can't believe the situation we've ended up in.

[11.09 a.m.]

Ms LOVELL (Rumney) - Mr President, I will speak to the suspension of the sitting, and I support suspending for the purpose of the briefing on this bill. I did just want to flag for members that I do have a series of amendments to this bill that I haven't circulated because I wasn't under the impression that we wouldn't be doing it today.

I just wanted to put on record I'm not sure that I'm really in a position to progress with this bill today. I suspect other members are probably in the same position. I support suspending for a briefing so that we can make a decision about that and people can be informed.

[11.10 a.m.]

Ms ARMITAGE (Launceston) - Mr President, I support suspension for a briefing. I agree with the comments that the other members have made. I would like to have seen us continue with the bill that we were debating yesterday, I think, for certainty, particularly for those in the community, whichever argument they take. I think it's disappointing from that perspective, but I will support the suspension for a briefing.

Mr VINCENT (Prosser - Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - Thank you, Mr President. I fully understand the passion involved in this. We saw that yesterday and I listened very closely on a personal basis last night to both sides of the

discussion and the points. Like I said, I fully understand the passion in the room on that from my point. I heard a lot of debate yesterday and especially last night on a lot of unanswered questions and probably not the full communication that would need to be on the bill.

I understand it is the government's right to order the business, and certainly the order of business was that we wanted to bring Grange forward, and that is what we certainly have done this morning. I respect the quickness that was dealt with. The residential bill was also on the list to go forward. As always, I, as well as other members of this House, try to balance the various views and cannot always please everybody. I understand some people have made up their minds, some people have not. I fully respect everybody in the room and would like to see more discussion on this from a personal point of view. At this stage the government has withdrawn the bill from the orders of the day and will continue as it is.

Sitting suspended from 11.12 a.m. to 2.30 p.m.

QUESTIONS

South Arm Road - Works

Ms LOVELL question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE and TRANSPORT, Mr VINCENT

My question is in relation to upcoming roadworks planned for the South Arm Road between Gellibrand Drive and Fort Direction Road in South Arm. I understand the South Arm Peninsula Residents Association has written to you to ask whether the Goat Bluff intersection will be included as part of those planned works. Can you update the Council on that?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for Rumney for the question. There have been a few letters that have come in. They've done a fairly good job as the progress association of highlighting the issue and I should take note of that. It is very, very good to see a local association noticing that roadworks were about to happen and being productive towards asking the right questions. So many times we hear about after the fact, not before the fact.

I have been able to check at a meeting that I had with the deputy secretary. They are relatively minor roadworks that are being done throughout that neck of the woods all the way down into South Arm. It will be patching and making sure the roads are in the best possible nick. That intersection we have noted does need some attention.

It is actually under the control of the gentleman, the member sitting beside you, as in a Parks road. I won't be so rude to handball it back to the Parks minister. The deputy secretary was more than happy to take it on notice and look at it should there be other more serious expenditure on that road.

As you know, there are various sections of that road that are in for part of that highway corridor. It has now been highlighted. When you look at it on Google Maps, you can see that it's probably a very appropriate skid pan and things like that down there. It has been noted by

the deputy secretary for referring that the work will not be done on this maintenance trip through.

Tasman Bridge - Traffic Management

Mr EDMUNDS question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE and TRANSPORT, Mr VINCENT

[2.33 p.m.]

In May 2025, I sought a trial of more dynamic traffic management for Tasman Bridge traffic on behalf of working parents in my electorate. At the time, Pulse news reported comments from a State Growth spokesperson, who said:

> ... the current system does have some built-in flexibility, although it may not be apparent to daily commuters.
>
> While the tidal flow switch typically starts at 9am, it is monitored daily from our traffic management centre and at times, due to an incident or unusual traffic flow, may be brought forward or delayed as required ...

Minister, during Wednesday's traffic closures due to an accident, did State Growth delay or bring forward any changes to lane management on the bridge as usual?

ANSWER

Thank you, I've got the right information now. Too many bits of paper there, I must say. The department actively manages the changeover of the Tasman Bridge traffic to optimise traffic flows for the overall network, and the timing of the tidal flow lane changeover at the end of the morning peak is generally around 9 a.m., but varies by 15 minutes or sometimes longer, to balance traffic demand in both directions.

Incidents on the bridge with yesterday morning's consequences are rare. It involved motorcyclist who needed medical treatment at the scene, and the closure of two lanes of the bridge, one in each direction, for over an hour during the peak period, as most of us found out. Most crashes involve a single lane and are able to be cleared quickly.

The last comparable incident of this scale of impact was the truck rollover from the eastern entrance in January 2023.

During the incident yesterday, the traffic flow did remain in its morning peak mode longer to allow the Tasman Highway traffic into the city to clear as quickly as possible.

I could, with tongue in cheek, extend that answer like I did the other year about the traffic control mechanisms out there, and give half an hour of detail on how they do it. I will not. I have seen that system work so well through remote cameras in being able to control even the traffic lights to assist in maximising the flow of traffic when it's needed to be.

Corporate Sponsorship in Schools - Tassal

Ms WEBB question to MINISTER for EDUCATION, Ms PALMER

[2.36 p.m.]

My question relates to departmental policy regarding corporate sector involvement with our schools. Minister, are you aware of a recent report posted by *The Tasman Gazette* on its digital platform stating that aquaculture company Tassal is covering the cost for student photo packs at Tasman District School? This is effectively sponsorship of a school process.

My questions are these: who authorised this corporate sponsorship of all school photo packs at Tasman District? Will there be any company branding or promotional material of any kind included with the sponsored school photo packs? Can you clarify whether this sponsorship or arrangement is consistent with current departmental policies, including the partnering with external organisations procedure, and the sponsorship and commercial arrangement for educational settings procedure, or any other relevant departmental policy? If so, how?

Were families provided with the option to opt out from having their school photos provided by Tassal? Can you guarantee that no student or families felt or were blocked from engaging with the school photo process because they did not wish to have or be associated with Tassal-paid products? If the Tasman Peninsula Marine Protection group, for example, or the Neighbours of Fish Farming Tasmania wished to offer similar school assistance, how would they go about doing so?

ANSWER

Mr President, there's quite a lot to the member's questions, so the majority of that I will need to take on notice and get those answers for you. What I can say is I can repeat, when you've asked me sort of similar questions in this place, that I am aware that external programs may be offered in schools, including initiatives delivered by industry, community organisations, sporting clubs and specialist providers in accordance with the Department for Education, Children and Young People's partnering with external organisations policy, and partnering with external organisations procedure. This policy and procedure provides clear guidance on the requirements and the expectations of programs and services offered by external organisations to schools.

External providers do not have an automatic right to access school sites. It's our principals that are best placed to determine whether a proposed program aligns with the requirements outlined in the policy and the procedure, whether their school has the capacity to participate, and how the program fits within the local context and the need of their students. Schools are expected to communicate with families regarding participation in such activities, and parents and carers may choose to opt their child out if they wish. With regard to some of the more detailed aspects of your question, I will take those on notice.

Ms Webb - Thank you, minister, and I appreciate that. I will send them through to your office so you can see them. I would just check with you: you do recognise that a program being delivered in a school is different to the school photo process being corporate sponsored, which ideally is an across-the-whole-school process for every child? This is a corporate sponsorship as opposed to an organisation engaging in a small program or activity.

Mr PRESIDENT - We will take that on notice.

E-Bike Regulations - Review

Ms THOMAS question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE and TRANSPORT, Mr VINCENT

[2.40 p.m.]

In 2023 the Tasmanian government initiated a comprehensive review of e-bike regulations. The review extended into 2024 where targeted community engagement was undertaken with feedback sought from the community and a broad range of stakeholders. My questions are:

(1) Three years on, has the government completed the review?

(2) When and where will the review report be published?

(3) What solutions are being proposed or explored?

(4) What are the timeframes for implementing any recommendations arising from the review?

ANSWER

Mr President, thank you to the member for this, because it is a subject that is being talked about everywhere and it is on the news quite regularly. It is a developing and changing field at the moment. In answer to your question:

(1) The review was primarily concerned with assessing options for the introduction of higher-powered e-bikes in Tasmania. This was in response to the then-increasing interest in these types of vehicles and their potential use on Tasmania's hilly terrain.

Since the completion of the consultation in November 2024, the position of all jurisdictions with respect to e-bikes has evolved. There are growing safety concerns about the availability and use of high-powered devices.

In November 2025, the national infrastructure and transport ministers agreed to work towards a national framework for e-mobility devices to ensure their safe use is supported by sensible supply restrictions, clear rules, education and guidance materials.

The Tasmanian government is participating in the development of this framework, which aims to create consistency across jurisdictions and address the safety risks posed by high-powered devices.

(2) The Tasmanian government has no plans to seek a final report from the e-bike review, recognising that the original scope and intent is not

consistent with the current safety concerns and has been superseded by the national review and framework we are now involved with.

(3) The e-bike review was limited to considering options to allow the legal use of e-bikes with greater power or speed assistance and did not consider any changes to the rules or requirements for existing legal e-bikes.

(4) The infrastructure and transport ministers' meeting will be provided with the first update on the development of the national framework at its next meeting in mid-2026. I have also discussed the issue with the Tasmanian Road Safety Advisory Council and recently, when I was in Canberra, with the federal minister responsible for road safety. We are seeing Queensland and New South Wales leading some of the things that need to happen in this area. I hope to have more news during the year so that it is uniform rules that apply to the growing interest in these devices.

Macquarie Point Stadium - P90 Report on Stadium Costs

Ms O'CONNOR question to LEADER for the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Ms RATTRAY

[2.44 p.m.]

During debate in private members' time on Tuesday in relation to notice of motion No. 14, the Leader for the Government indicated that she would seek advice from government as to whether or not members could be provided with a confidential copy of the alleged P90 assessment on stadium costs. I wonder if the Leader for the Government has any update on that request.

ANSWER

Mr President, I do have answers to the questions that have been asked by the honourable member for Hobart regarding the Macquarie Point stadium P90. The member for Hobart has advanced a range of assertions regarding the government's costings and processes for the Macquarie Point stadium, including the claims that a P90 estimate does not exist or did not exist prior to December 2025. I gave an undertaking to provide some information. So, once again, I can confirm that a P90 does exist. The member has continued to characterise the government and Macquarie Point Development Corporation's position on confidentiality as unjustified and accused both parties of misleading the member for Elwick and parliament.

These allegations are refuted and, as stated on Tuesday, the updated cost estimate provided in October 2025 in response to a motion in the other place was based on the P90. The good faith response to the member's motion included further detail on the P90, project governance, oversight framework and independent probity. That's what I have thus far.

Macquarie Point Stadium - P90 Report on Stadium Costs

Ms O'CONNOR question to LEADER for the GOVERNMENT in the LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, Ms RATTRAY

[2.51 p.m.]

I thank the Leader for the Government for that response, but the question was: will government provide to members of Council, on a confidential basis - and presuming that confidentiality will be trusted - will the government provide the P90 on a confidential basis to members of this place for us to examine and form our own views?

ANSWER

Mr President, I will take that on notice, and again respectfully acknowledge the member's request.

Devonport Online Access Centre - Closure

Ms LOVELL question to MINISTER for EDUCATION, Ms PALMER

[2.46 p.m.]

Your government's decision to close the Devonport online access centre and amalgamate with the local library has disappointed locals who don't believe the library will provide the same level of service. The online access centre provides a necessary service to the community, especially for some senior citizens who have difficulty using technology. The volunteer staff are extremely knowledgeable and demonstrate professionalism and patience when helping people use the service. Users have some doubts that this will be the case with the new arrangements unless additional staff and computers are provided.

Minister, will you consider reversing this decision for the Devonport centre and the other centres that are also being closed around the state?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the honourable member for the question. Through our digital future strategy, our government recognises the importance of Tasmanians having online access to services and the digital skills that they need to work, learn, connect, and, of course, to participate in modern life. We deliver digital inclusion through 46 Libraries Tasmania sites that offer free wi-fi, computer access and digital literacy support with strong community reach and engagement. Services are also provided through 15 independent community-managed online access centres, and that's funded through the Digital Connections grant.

While these centres have played an important role, over time, a significant number have closed. It has largely been due to ongoing issues, primarily around attracting volunteers for those management committees that are required, and also volunteers to provide that front-of-house service.

We commissioned an independent review of digital inclusion in Tasmania in 2024 to try to better understand how those services could be strengthened and how we could make them

more sustainable into the future. While the review actually recommended the phasing-out of online access centres, the government did not support this approach. Instead, we are transitioning digital inclusion services to local library sites where there is a clear duplication of service.

In four locations, online access centres will amalgamate with local libraries. The remaining 11 online access centres will receive an increase in annual funding. These changes will not result in any community losing digital inclusion services. Where there's an amalgamation with libraries, digital support will be strengthened, as these libraries quite often have longer opening hours compared to some of our local online access centres. Libraries Tasmania has consulted closely with online access centres and with relevant local councils, liaising with them and looking for ways of ensuring digital inclusion services remain sustainable.

Your question specifically mentioned the Devonport library service. Services are absolutely not being cut. Services from the online access centre are transitioning across to the library. There's no reduction in service at the library. In fact, we've been improving community access by making it an open access library and I understand that it's given about, I think it's about 10 more hours, where there can be support and online access for locals because of the longer opening hours of the library. I also believe that there's much better wi-fi at the library that is accessible to those coming in.

Wilkinsons Point Ferries - Proposal

Mr EDMUNDS question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE and TRANSPORT, Mr VINCENT

[2.50 p.m.]

Recent Public Accounts Committee hearings have heard that the proposed ferries for the Wilkinsons Point site will only be utilised for major events and not commuter transport. Is this the case and does this align with the original request for investment in terminals by the Greater Hobart Councils, and/or the terms of the grant funding from the federal government?

ANSWER

Mr President, I have a bit about this for the member. The November 2023 River Derwent Ferry Service Masterplan rates all the assessed ferry terminal locations.

With regard to Wilkinsons Point, it highlights its strength as a location for everyday transport but lists its weakness when it comes to commuter services.

It cites the trip is less direct than using road transport options and has a modest residential catchment within walking distance. It also makes the comment that integration with the public transport network is challenging and unlikely. The closest existing bus stop is 850 m away and public transport on adjacent roads - Brooker Highway, Goodwood Road - is at lower frequency.

It does note there is an opportunity for an increase in commuter services as the area is further developed, which is particularly relevant to our conversations about developing the current Defence land at Dowsing Point.

I seek leave at this point to table a document and have it incorporated into the *Hansard* record.

I need to withdraw that last request, please, at the suggestion of the Clerk, and just table the document. I'm seeking to table the document.

Leave granted; document tabled.

Ms Rattray - I think I need to take responsibility for the minister's wrong card there. What's new today?

Mr PRESIDENT - We can all share the blame.

Mr VINCENT - The partnership between the three Greater Hobart councils involved in delivering terminals on the River Derwent is a direct relationship between the councils and the Australian Government. It's unusual for such a funding arrangement to exist, but in this instance it does and the state isn't party to it, nor do we negotiate it. So, I'm unable to reflect on the councils' original request to the federal government, but obviously we watch it very closely.

Ms Rattray - While there's some transition happening in the Chamber, and before I make a start, I've just had a message from the former member for Hobart, and I'd just like to extend our warmest wishes to him. I can't understand why he'd be watching, but he certainly loved the place while he was here, the honourable Rob Valentine.

RESIDENTIAL PARKS BILL 2026 (No. 2)

Second Reading

Resumed from above (page 11).

[2.54 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre - Leader for the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I move -

That the bill be read a second time.

The rules affecting long-term caravan park residents are complicated, spanning multiple areas including planning regulations, building codes and other legislation. Several different laws might apply to both park owners and residents, including contract law, the Australian Consumer Law and various codes of practice.

I'm very pleased to be bringing this bill to this place on behalf of the government. This is an important reform which will improve the lives of many Tasmanians as well as making the rules simpler and clearer for park operators.

The bill establishes a range of rights and obligations on park owners as well as residents in these parks.

The bill applies to site agreements where the site is, or will be, the resident's principal place of residence and the right to occupy is 90 days or longer.

It will also apply where multiple agreements of shorter than 90 days cumulatively exceed 90 days.

If a resident occupies a site for 90 days or more, the legislation is taken to apply unless proved otherwise. This does not, however, mean that an agreement arises where a person refuses or fails to leave as agreed at the end of an agreement or where someone has stayed on a site without authority to stay there.

The legislation will not apply to holiday stays, non-principal residences, normal residential tenancies under the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997*, hotels and motels, education or healthcare accommodation, retirement villages, boarding and lodging, mortgages, certain land sale contracts with temporary occupation rights, or other prescribed agreements. The scheme focuses on long-term site agreements where the resident owns their dwelling. This scheme does not apply to the rental of onsite vans or cabins where they are owned by the park operator.

The bill has been drafted so as to recognise the legitimate rights, obligations and expectations of both park owners and long-term residents in the park. Under the bill, a residential park agreement must be in writing and the agreement, alongside various other key pieces of information, must be provided to a prospective resident before they enter into the agreement.

The bill includes a range of terms that must form part of a residential park agreement. These include right to access, right to quiet enjoyment, and prevention from causing a nuisance to other residents. If power and water are provided to the site, reasonable unimpeded access to these amenities is required throughout the agreement.

The bill provides that a register of residential parks is maintained by Consumer Building and Occupational Services (CBOS) within the Department of Justice. CBOS will be able to add parks as well as remove parks from the register where they no longer have residents under such an agreement. A park that has one or more residential park agreements is legally required to register with CBOS.

The bill sets out when and how a resident or a park owner can terminate a residential park agreement. There is no provision for no-grounds termination of agreement. This is in line with the protections already afforded tenants under the residential tenancy agreements in the state.

The bill also provides clarity for park owners and residents about the transfer of agreements and about the right to sell a dwelling or structure owned by the resident.

The bill provides clarity as to what charges can be demanded by a park owner. A security deposit is allowed; however this cannot be more than four weeks rent. It also cannot be retained when a resident leaves other than for unpaid rent, reasonable cost for replacement of lost or unreturned keys or security devices, or for the reasonable cost of removal of rubbish or abandoned goods on the site.

A resident can only be charged for water or electricity where there is separate metering that identifies the use of the specific resident.

If a park has an embedded electricity network and a resident is required to pay for electricity, they must be provided with an account specifying how much the resident is being charged and how that amount was calculated.

If the provision of water and electricity forms part of the agreement, the park owner must take all reasonable steps to maintain the relevant services while the agreement is in force.

The bill provides a clear process for dealing with property or goods that have been abandoned by a resident after they move out of the park. There are separate provisions depending on the nature of the goods. For example, there are different requirements for the handling of abandoned property that is low value or perishable, dealing with abandoned goods that are personal documents, or dealing with an abandoned dwelling or an item of property over a prescribed value. These provisions balance the rights of park owners to manage their park with protecting the interests of residents.

The bill provides that where a park has a number of long-term residents, they may form a residents' committee to discuss and advocate for their interests in the park. A residents' committee can be elected to comprise of residents from at least five different occupied sites in the park. A park owner cannot unreasonably interfere with residents' rights to form committees and must take all reasonable steps to provide somewhere for such a committee to meet. A park owner must also consider representations made by a committee and must provide a written response to the committee. Where there are a number of long-term residents in a park, a residents' committee provides a practical process for communication between a park owner and residents. There is nothing in the bill preventing a committee from receiving assistance, support and advice from experts or advocates who are not residents, however these individuals cannot be voting members of the committee.

The bill has been developed to support a positive and constructive relationship between park owners and residents. However, it is recognised that conflict can occur and does occur. Therefore, the bill also makes provisions for TASCAT to receive and consider applications on a range of matters. Examples of these include the following:

- An application seeking a declaration that a rent increase is excessive;
- an application seeking a declaration that a park rule or park rules are unreasonable;
- an application to rescind an unfair or unconscionable term of an agreement;
- an application to appeal a refusal to transfer a residential park agreement;
- an application for an order of possession; and
- an urgent application to terminate an agreement where a notice to vacate has been issued for violence.

The bill also enables TASCAT to acknowledge that a notice to terminate, or a notice for possession, was issued solely, or in part, as retaliation for a resident seeking to enforce a right, or making a complaint, in relation to their residency. In such a case, TASCAT has the power to refuse such an application by a park owner and make an order reinstating the residential park agreement with any conditions considered appropriate in the circumstances.

The bill provides for the making of transitional regulations. This power has been included so that specific provisions can be made for certain identified agreements where there are legacy issues in relation to planning and building approval to be exempt from those requirements for a transitional period of up to five years. This will enable the specific issues facing those individuals to be addressed during the initial five years of operation of the act. These transitional regulations can only be made on the advice of the Director of Building Control and/or the department responsible for the administration of the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*, and depending on which act or acts the regulations relate to.

In addition to any transitional regulations, the bill provides for a range of matters to be included in ordinary regulations. These include:

- the setting out of reasonable grounds for refusing to transfer an agreement;
- offences for which an infringement notice can be issued;
- making provision for the form or content of any document referred to in the bill;
- record-keeping requirements;
- a requirement that certain information must be provided to residents;
- making provision for, and in respect of, the election, term of office, functions and procedures of resident committees;
- authorising any matter to be determined, applied or regulated by a person or entity specified in the regulations;
- the regulations may exempt a person, a class of persons, matter or other thing from the operation of this act or any specified provision of the act or the regulations including, but not limited to, an exemption from any fee, charge or levy payable under the act;
- making provision for model park rules that may be adopted, whether with or without amendment, by a park owner.

Such model park rules and any other regulations are being refined at present to ensure they are ready for the commencement of the act.

The bill also provides that the Director of Consumer Affairs can prepare and publish a model residential park agreement. This may then be used by park owners in full or adapted. This model park agreement is also being prepared at present. Both the model park agreement and the model park rules will be consulted on prior to finalisation.

The bill provides that certain documents and forms must be in the 'approved form'. This means that these documents must use the form as approved by the Director of Consumer Affairs. Examples of those are:

- a warning notice which advises a person entering into an agreement that the park owner does not intend to extend the agreement beyond the initial term identified;
- information identifying each charge and any services provided to a resident under an agreement, at or prior to signing the agreement;

- a notice advising a resident of abandoned goods; a notice to leave for a serious act of violence; and
- a notice of termination.

This ensures that such forms and notices contain and require all the appropriate information. Having an approved form rather than a prescribed form enables flexibility, with the Director of Consumer Affairs able to adapt or add to a form where an issue is identified.

The Director of Consumer Affairs is identified as a key regulator in the bill. The director will maintain a register of all parks that are residential parks. There is the capacity to update this register regularly, and park owners are required under the bill to register when they have residential parks agreements on foot. The Director of Consumer Affairs will ensure that the register is publicly available online. The director has the power under the bill to determine a dispute as to whether the act applies to a certain agreement; there is then an avenue to appeal to TASCAT.

The director also has the role of approving various forms, as mentioned previously, and seeking to make and then amend, when required, model rules and the model park agreement to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

The bill commences on proclamation, thereby ensuring that the relevant regulations and approved forms are made and in place, and that all affected individuals are aware of the changes. However, the government intends to move an amendment so that the bill will commence on a day or days to be proclaimed, and I will address this further and later in my contribution.

A consultation draft of the bill was released for public consultation on 18 December 2025, with the consultation period concluding on 8 February 2026. During this time, CBOS conducted a number of face-to-face sessions with interested stakeholders. The consultation yielded 58 written submissions from a wide range of interested individuals and groups including:

- past and current members of parks;
- park owners;
- representative groups of industry related to caravan parks and caravans in general;
- community advocacy and legal groups;
- state government departments and authorities;
- local government; and
- interested members of the community.

The government would like to thank everyone who took the time to provide feedback. The government and the Department of Justice have considered the wide variety of views and all the specific and detailed feedback on the bill. Written submissions along with feedback provided at the face-to-face sessions has been invaluable to the refining of the bill.

A number of amendments were made to the consultation draft of the bill following the consultation period and in summary these include:

- the removal of the ability to terminate residential park agreements without grounds;
- the insertion of a requirement that, if electricity and/or water services are provided as part of the agreement, these services are required to be maintained during the agreement;
- several specific timeframes have been inserted in the bill to ensure action required under the bill is taken in a reasonable timeframe;
- amendments to ensure that a right to sell a dwelling or structure is facilitated even when a person is no longer able to live at the park;
- amendments to provisions relating to access to ensure that residents are entitled to have guests or other people, such as healthcare providers, tradespeople or delivery persons, access the park; and
- limited grounds for retaining a bond at the end of an agreement.

The government has been working constructively and engaging in good faith on a broad range of perspectives across the parliament, and supported or did not oppose a number of amendments in the other place to improve the operation of the bill. The government's constructive and collaborative approach to this policy over the journey of this reform has strengthened the bill and provided greater clarity and protection for both residents and park owners.

The most consequential amendments were made to utilise the security deposit framework through the Rental Deposit Authority. Those amendments replace the bond model with a scheme under which security deposits are paid to the Rental Deposit Authority.

The other place also added a specific transitional provision requiring security deposits already being held by park owners at commencement to be paid into the Rental Deposit Authority as soon as practicable. The government made it clear in the other place that the amendments relating to the Rental Deposit Authority will require sufficient implementation time before the bill can be fully brought into operation. Therefore, the government will be moving an amendment to clause 2 to provide for commencement on the day or days to be proclaimed. This will allow time for the necessary administrative machinery to be put in place, including forms, processes and coordination with the Rental Deposit Authority and the Residential Tenancy Commissioner.

Other amendments were also directed at improving fairness and workability across the bill. They have included:

- a different threshold for residents to challenge unreasonable park rules by allowing one or more residents, rather than a majority of residents, to apply to the tribunal;
- a clearer right for parties to terminate an agreement by mutual written consent;

- enhanced notice requirements so termination notices make clear where appeal rights exist;
- the insertion of a broader appeal mechanism in relation to termination of agreements;
- the replacement of 'the harsh or unconscionable test' with an 'unfair or unconscionable' standard for the Tasmanian Civil & Administrative Tribunal to rescind or vary terms of a residential park agreement at a resident's request.

The government is mindful that regulatory balance is necessary to ensure that operators of residential parks are not driven out of the market by overregulation and that the balance is not shifted too far one way in terms of the rights of parties. For that reason, the government will continue to oppose amendments where they will have that effect.

The government reiterates supporting materials will be available to assist residents and ensure park owners are fully informed of how the new bill will apply to them.

Some general points on the amendments. At the outset, the government indicated in the other place that it was prepared to engage constructively on amendments to this bill and where those amendments improve legislation and remain practical to implement. I acknowledge that the member for Rumney has distributed some amendments to members. Certainly, that will be something that will be progressed at a later time.

The bill, as it was originally introduced and now as amended, reflects a deliberate and balanced policy position. It provides strong protections for residents while also seeking to maintain the viability of residential parks as an important form of accommodation. That balance matters. We want residents properly protected, but we also want park operators to remain in the market and to continue providing this accommodation with confidence.

Although the specific issues faced by residents at Beauty Point have been referred to as part of putting this bill together, I feel I need to acknowledge that there are a wide range of park users and park owners across the state. Amendments may significantly impact on all of those stakeholders. As I have already said, the government has approached this process in good faith and in a genuinely collaborative way.

That is my offering on the bill at this point in time, and I commend the bill to the Council.

[3.19 p.m.]

Ms PALMER (Rosevears - Minister for Children and Youth) - Thank you, Mr President. Thank you, Leader, for the second reading speech. I rise to support the Residential Parks Bill 2026. This is an important reform and it responds to a long standing policy problem that has affected Tasmanians living in residential parks, and it does so in a way that is practical, balanced and fair. For too long the rules affecting long-term caravan park residents have been fragmented and unclear. Different legal frameworks can apply across planning, building, contract and consumer law, and that has created uncertainty not only for residents but also for park owners trying to do the right thing.

This legislation has come about as a result of a complex and rather heartbreaking set of circumstances in a park in my electorate. The residents of the Beauty Point Tourist Park are

some of the most precious members of our community. For some, Beauty Point has always been their home. For some, they came to this beautiful part of the West Tamar for a new life, but for all, it is their home. Some are returned veterans, some have disabilities, some are retirees and some are older, but they are all part of our community.

One of my first interactions with these residents was a group who came to visit me in my electorate office in Riverside some time ago. My electorate office is quite small. Everything in it is quite small. The largest space is the kitchen. So the kitchen is my meeting room. In my entire life, conversations held in a kitchen have been usually the best conversations of my life, and it's also where I manage to be able to talk to my children the most. So we gathered in my work kitchen and one by one, these residents began to open up about the circumstances they found themselves in. Their stories were personal, and there were tears, and they were also sharing stories about other people from the park who weren't able to be there in my office that day. This was the beginning of many conversations and phone calls and emails trying to work our way through some really exceptionally difficult circumstances.

I have to say, in the six years that I have been the member for Rosevears, I've never felt more helpless as a member of parliament in trying to advocate for those I consider to be some of the most vulnerable in my community. Each conversation, every action, seemed to come with a consequence, and often it was not a consequence that I had to bear. I called on relevant ministers, local members, and senior bureaucrats to try to find a way through without others seeing a fallout. With every month that went past, and with every action, another resident found themselves facing eviction. They were so afraid, and there is a real and human impact that comes with living with uncertainty, and my heart broke for them. I kept thinking of my dear mum. She's 85, she's got a whole facade of medical conditions, but she lives just across the driveway from our house, so my kids are in and out of Nanna's house constantly. She remains very much the rock of our family, but she is frail and she is fragile, and I cannot imagine if she had been forced to live through what some of these residents have had to live through during a time that should have been far more peaceful.

The complexities of this situation were exhausting for those trying to live their lives in a place that they loved. There were many behind the scenes trying to find a way through: members of parliament, individual members of our community, the Beauty Point Tourist Park Residents' Association and indeed the West Tamar Council. The CEO, Kristen Desmond, took such a human view while ensuring the council was discharging its regulatory obligations. I will turn my contribution towards the legislation. However, I do need to state the work that has been done by those advocating for these residents has been one of the greatest examples of a community refusing to back down, refusing to leave people behind. I started to make a list of those people for this contribution, but I was so concerned that I would miss someone, so I simply just want to put on the record to those people, you know who you are and you are amazing. You have been an absolute blessing, and we thank you for what you've done.

This bill is about bringing greater clarity to this space. It establishes a proper statutory framework for site agreements where a person is living in a residential park as their principal place of residence. It creates a clearer statement of rights and obligations. It provides greater certainty around agreements, charges, termination, dispute resolution, access to services, abandoned property and the role of resident committees.

Importantly, it does so while recognising that both residents and our park owners right across Tasmania have legitimate interests that need to be respected. I believe this gets the

balance right, and it's balance that does matter. This bill is not about treating every arrangement in the same way. It is carefully directed to long-term residential arrangements. It applies where the site is or will be the resident's principal place of residency and the right to occupy is 90 days or longer. It can also apply where multiple shorter agreements cumulatively exceed 90 days.

At the same time, it does not extend into holiday accommodation, non-principal residence, ordinary residential tenancies, hotels and motels, retirement villages, educational or healthcare accommodation, boarding and lodging, or other excluded arrangements. That is an important feature of the bill, because it is targeted and it is deliberate. It is intended to deal with a specific gap in the current law. The focus of the scheme is on those arrangements where a resident owns their dwelling and occupies a site within a park as their home. That is a distinct situation and it warrants a clear and tailored legislative response.

The bill provides a range of practical protections for residents: residential park agreements must be in writing; key information must be provided before the agreement is entered into; certain basic terms must apply, including rights of access and quiet enjoyment and obligations not to cause nuisance; and where water and power are provided to the site, the resident is entitled to reasonable and unimpeded access to those services throughout the agreement. These are sensible measures. They are not excessive, they are basic protections that bring transparency and fairness to arrangements that can have a very significant impact on people's daily lives.

The bill also creates greater certainty around charges and security deposits. It makes clear what can and cannot be demanded by a park owner. It limits the circumstances in which a security deposit can be retained and also provides that water and electricity can only be charged in certain circumstances, including where there is separate metering identifying the use of the specific resident. Again, these are sensible reforms. They are directed to fairness, to accountability and to clarity.

The bill also provides clear mechanisms for dispute resolution. TASCAT will have an important role in dealing with a range of measures, including excessive rent increases, unreasonable park rules, unfair or unconscionable terms, transfer disputes, possession matters and urgent termination applications involving violence. It also provides protection against retaliatory conduct by ensuring the tribunal can address situations where actions have been taken against a resident because that resident sought to exercise a right or to make a complaint. That is a very important safeguarding aspect of this legislation.

It is also important to note that the bill recognises the practical realities of residential parks as communities. It enables residents committees to be formed, and it gives them a legitimate role in representing resident interests and engaging with park owners. That is a constructive feature of the bill, because good communication can often prevent disputes from escalating in the first place.

I also want to acknowledge that this reform has not been developed in a vacuum: there was a consultation draft. There was broad consultation. Submissions were received from residents, park owners, industry bodies, advocacy groups, local government, government agencies and those members of the community who were interested in this. It's that feedback that has actually informed the bill and it has absolutely improved the bill. A number of significant changes were made following that consultation. These included: the removal of no-grounds termination; stronger requirements around maintenance of essential services;

clearer timeframes; improved provisions relating to access; support for the right to sell a dwelling or a structure; and limits on the retention of bonds. That tells us something important about this process. The government has listened, it has engaged constructively, and it has refined the legislation.

I want to acknowledge the Deputy Premier, the honourable Guy Barnett, in his capacity as Minister for Small Business, Trade and Consumer Affairs, for his immediate willingness to not just read through the submissions in the email, but to hear directly from the Beauty Point community. I asked the Deputy Premier if he would come to the West Tamar to discuss the draft legislation with community members and he didn't hesitate. We pulled together a roundtable. That included individual community members who I'd been heavily engaging with, members of the Beauty Point Tourist Park Residents Association, and local MP Mr Rob Fairs.

The Deputy Premier brought with him senior officials to hear firsthand from these amazing local advocates, the people on the ground who were living this day in, day out; the advocates who had that intimate knowledge of the complexities of the frightening legal situation that residents were finding themselves in. I'm really grateful to those senior officials, so I'm going to mention them: we had Brad Wagg and Sean Barry from Consumer Building and Occupational Services and we had Felicity Poulter from the Department of Justice. They all came to that round table with open minds and, importantly, with open hearts, as did the Deputy Premier. We met in the Beauty Point Uniting Church Hall. It's the most beautiful local space and it sits out the back of the Uniting Church.

Ms Rattray - A good place to have a committee meeting.

Ms PALMER - It was gorgeous. I could have been in any decade over the past 50 decades. I really could have been.

Ms Forrest - What decade were you dressed for?

Ms PALMER - Every decade, member for Murchison: always. It is a beautiful space, and it has seen its fair share of community events, but on this day it played host to the Deputy Premier, some of our most senior officials, and this great group of advocates. It was here that with great respectfulness - and might I say in an incredibly articulate way - concerns about the legislation were put forward, ideas were put forward and solutions were put forward. The meeting didn't happen in the halls of parliament or in a ministerial office, but in a local community church hall, and it was here that commitments were made to further enhance this legislation. It was quite a moment, and to be honest, the way consultation on legislation should be conducted.

I guess the same can be said of the bill's passage through the other place. As I say, the advocacy across this parliament, across all political divides, was certainly thorough. The government supported or did not oppose a number of amendments directed at improving the operation of the bill, and that collaborative approach, just like we saw in the Uniting Church hall, certainly strengthened this legislation.

Other amendments were also directed at improving fairness and workability, and they included: changes to the threshold for challenging unreasonable park rules; clearer provisions for mutual written termination; improved notice requirements; a broader appeal mechanism in relation to termination; and the adoption of an unfair or unconscionable standard in relation to

terms of residential park agreements. These are substantial reforms, but they are also measured reforms. It is important that we get the balance right. Residents deserve proper protections and greater certainty. Park owners also need a framework that is workable for them and does not make the operation of residential parks unviable. I believe this bill seeks to strike that balance, and that's why I support it.

One of the strengths of this bill is that it does not pretend every issue can be solved by broad principle alone. It provides for regulation, model park rules, a model agreement, approved forms and transitional arrangements. That means the framework can be supported by practical tools and guidance, and it means implementation can be done properly. That matters because reform is not just about passing legislation; it is also about ensuring people affected understand it and that they can work with it.

The government has made clear that supporting materials will be available to assist residents and ensure park owners are fully informed about how the new law will apply. That is also important because it will help to ensure the new framework operates the way it's intended to operate.

In the end, this bill is about fairness, certainty and clarity. It recognises that residential parks can be home for many Tasmanians, provides stronger protections for those residents, and it also provides clearer rules for park owners. It fills an important gap in the law, and it does so in a way that reflects consultation, collaboration and a practical understanding of the sector.

I once again want to recognise those amazing advocates who at times were absolutely pushed to the limit. It was a steep learning curve for them, it was a steep learning curve for many of us, but they didn't give up, and they fought hard for those who didn't feel they could fight for themselves. I want to thank them for that and hope they are really proud of this piece of legislation because they sit behind this piece of legislation, and I'm really proud of them and this bill. Thank you.

[3.36 p.m.]

Mr GAFFNEY (Mersey) - Thank you, Mr President, I rise to speak to the Residential Parks Bill. Before I go any further, I would like to declare that my brother has owned the Somerset Beachside Cabin and Caravan Park for over 20 years, and my sister and her partner also help him to run it. In light of my family connection, I've sought the advice of the Clerks and under the terms of Standing Order No. 103 relating to pecuniary interest, I have no direct or personal interest in the park, other than being fully aware of my siblings' involvement in its ownership and operations. I seek your advice as according to Standing Order No. 103, part (1), the Council may decide, on motion, whether I may vote upon questions relating to the bill when we get to the Committee stage.

In doing that, I'd like to draw the attention of this place to when Wayne and Jackie bought the place in 2006, I spent many hours down there assisting in the cafe and the nursery and working at the park. At that time I said to my brother, 'Am I getting paid?' He said, 'Well, no, Michael, your service is not of the standard that I would have to pay for it.' So, I had a three-year internship, and so in 2009 I put the question to him again. He said, 'well, no, now that you're a member of parliament, it would be wrong for you to have a second job.' So he got me both ways. I've only got to wait a few more years, and I think I can get him for elder abuse so I'm waiting for that.

However, that being said, and like almost every other family connection, it has given me unique insights into residential parks, and in considering the bill, I've also sought input and comment from other residential parks in my electorate. That's both the local government areas of Latrobe and Devonport. Their comments and conversations have been insightful, and they speak to the community of care that surrounds so many of their residential parks and their residents.

I do not apologise that my speech today may not reflect some of the information we gleaned from today's briefing. I did appreciate the briefings; I just haven't had a chance to mould that into the speech. There has been an interesting start to the morning, and I'm certain there are a few people out there watching and listening who may also be a little confused; however, this is where we find ourselves.

Residential parks fill an unmet and often growing need in so many of our communities. In a cost-of-living crisis which, for many people, and especially those approaching retirement, has been a constant challenge throughout their lives, the opportunity to own a dwelling on a residential park has been possibly their only opportunity to buy a place they can call their own, at a price that they can afford. It does come with a proviso: they can own a dwelling and must pay ground rent for the site it's on, and for access to any site facilities they may need.

At the current time, leasing arrangements for the site and access to park facilities are very much an individual arrangement between park owners and residents. As I've experienced, they can differ in every residential park. I suppose that's part of the challenge to which this is to provide a framework. All of them are subject to various rules and regulations that can vary across Tasmania on exactly how an agreement is worded or verbally agreed. I appreciate the member for Rosevears and her relationship with the people where she was coming from, where I suppose I sit on the other side of the fence, coming from knowing very well what my brother and sister and their family go through, so that is fine.

Like almost all agreements and contracts, they set up a schedule of rights and obligations for all parties. Often the most substantive elements are there to avoid unnecessary disagreement, or at least how those might be resolved in the fairest and most straightforward way. Recent instances have seen disagreements escalate and heading to the courts to be resolved, a move which has foreshadowed the development of the bill.

In the past, we have relied upon benevolent goodwill from all sides, and this does continue in almost all residential parks. A residential park is a unique community and at their best, those who own and operate them see themselves as guardians and custodians on what are close-knit communities that look out for each other. They perhaps reflect the very best of an old-school Tasmanian culture, one where no-one sees themselves as being any better than any other and we are all out to help each other get along. We might see the odd grumble or two, but we sort it out as best we can and then put it behind us to get on with life and living.

Residential parks can also act as a sanctuary for troubled souls who, through no fault of their own, have struggled in life and finding a home within their community. When they are looking for a place to live, the best park owners know their communities and will often go above and beyond to find a place for an incoming resident to call home. Anecdotal comments suggests what may be initially troubled souls often settle into being valued members of a residential park community. Perhaps it is indicative that the struggle to find a place to live

creates unbearable stress and pressure and impossible wellbeing challenges on some of the most vulnerable in our community.

Mr President, with these last points in mind, they lead me now on to a few questions and technical queries about the function and the operation of the bill.

The fact that a dwelling is placed or built on land belonging to the park owner sets up an interesting dynamic. It is one where the dwelling is technically regarded as being movable whilst often giving every impression of being a semi-permanent structure. There are also many variations of what might be termed a dwelling, which can range from an old caravan with wheels and tow bar still attached to what might be termed a modern-day shack fixed to the ground with solid walls and a Colourbond roof complete with running water, drainage and heat pump. It is a structure that may have evolved from a caravan that was first pulled up onto the site and often quietly added onto by the resident, whilst gently ignoring conventional planning and building regulations.

Therein lies another problem. The initial community consultation on the bill gave the opportunity for councils and the Local Government Association of Tasmania to examine the draft and put in a submission. Many did so. The quandary faced by councillors, as we heard this morning, which may have had a residential park within their municipality, is that they have a statutory responsibility to ensure the compliance of dwellings with established planning, building and plumbing regulations. The quandary comes as a residential park falls between two stools. Are they to be seen as permanent structures, as buildings, or are they to be seen as temporary movable structures such as a caravan or mobile home?

The bill uses the term 'dwelling', which it vaguely defines in broad, generic terms, and yet the bill offers highly detailed and precise clauses regarding the transfer of ownership of a dwelling and the processes by which it might be relocated or removed, and who is likely to bear the cost. Selling or relocating dwellings such as a tent, a yurt, a campervan or roadworthy caravan is a very different proposition to that of a 30-year-old mobile home that has its axles and tow bar removed and extensions built onto it set in concreted footings. The first is an easy task and the second would or could well be a costly demolition job with an excavator and approved waste disposal.

The bill does attempt to regulate a resident's alterations or additions to a dwelling in section 27. However, its equivocal use of the terms 'reasonable' and 'unreasonable' leaves a degree of subjectivity in the park owners' consent process, one that perhaps overlaps with the current ad hoc arrangements on dwelling alterations in existing parks. The clause does hint at an undefined legal requirement as grounds for refusal, and maybe that is a nod to future changes in building and planning regulations for residential park dwellings, a neat segue into the bill's transitional provisions.

The transitional provisions in Schedule 1 does leave open the question as to how, over a five-year period, regulations may be made to address these quirks. I am sure councils and park owners will be taking a keen interest in the process as they all attempt to square the circle of what might be seen as a building and what can be defined as a temporary structure. To help the process, can the government offer greater clarity in the definition of the term 'dwelling' used throughout the bill? Can it take account of the ease, or not, of relocating a dwelling and who might be responsible for the difference in costs of doing so?

I also have to consider that the transitional provisions leave a degree of uncertainty around existing structures. Is there an opportunity of including grandfathering clauses in the transitional regulations, so that dwellings in their current and ongoing ownership will not be subject to the retrospective application of updated regulations?

There are a number of gaps in the bill. One of the most significant is its complete silence on insurance and liability. The bill regulates almost every aspect of living in a residential park, from lease agreements, residents committees to abandoned property and park rules; yet, it says nothing about regulations for mitigating and managing risk and loss if something were to go wrong.

In a community of what are often closely spaced dwellings, the bill provides no guidance if a dwelling were to catch on fire and damage the home next door. It does not define a responsibility or require residents to insure their dwellings. In a time when we are seeing an increasing number of spontaneous house fires caused by rechargeable lithium batteries, it's a very real and increasing danger. For many residents, particularly older Tasmanians on limited incomes with increasing health-related expenses, a single uninsured loss can be financially devastating. We only have to look at the back of past newspaper reports to see the devastating impact on a family of an uninsured house fire or flood event.

For park owners, the absence of any statutory framework in the bill creates a degree of uncertainty. The park rules do not allow a park owner to insist that residents have insurance or have smoke alarms. Subsequently, they may face claims, disputes or pressure to compensate residents even when they have done nothing wrong.

The bill creates a highly regulated agreement structure between residents and park owners without addressing the most basic question of what happens when disaster strikes. As responsible businesses, park owners naturally carry business insurance as an essential part of their risk management and some residents do too, but not all. I understand that the RACT did offer insurance for the owners of dwellings in residential parks, but it's now only for ongoing policies as it has closed its books to new policy holders.

We also have a possible knock-on effect that the bill may have on business insurance for park owners. I understand for one owner their business insurance premium went up by $6000 in just one year. It's an additional cost that will have to be passed on to the residents' site fees. I also understand an ongoing concern for park owners, is that even going through a broker, it appears there is only one company in the world that offers insurance for residential parks and it's based in the UK. Has the government consulted with that company on the likely insurance implications from the bill? There's always a chance that changes will encourage new policy writers to enter the market, or maybe the opposite, as one park owner said to me:

> It's getting much harder to get park insurance. My broker basically said it's a year-by-year proposal now. If I lose my current insurer, he's doubtful how I could replace them.

If the new act does cause an issue and the sole UK-based underwriter withdraws its policy, what options will park owners have? Or will TasInsure and or the government come to the rescue of both park owners and residents?

Looking again to the residents, one of the practical issues in this bill is the way it formalises the dialogue between park owners and residents. The bill places clear and forcible obligations on the park owner. They must consult, they must notify and they must give a residents committee every opportunity to make representations, and the park owner must respond in writing. It's a natural and clear option as it avoids the risk of anecdotal confusion, creates certainty and gives a physical record of the communication. However, the bill does not require the committee to provide those self-same representations to the park owner in writing. There is no regulated expectation for the residents committee to provide written correspondence, keep minutes or record decisions, and no guidance on its governance other than a vague rule to determine which group or committee a park owner should engage with. The committee can communicate in any way it sees fit - verbally, informally, via social media, or not at all - yet, the owner must still demonstrate that they have consulted and responded in writing, even if a committee chooses to engage in an unregulated manner. The different risk creates a real problem.

As we've seen in recent disputes, written evidence is a crucial tool in determining an equitable outcome. It removes hearsay. The owner carries the legal obligations with penalties attached, and the committee with none of the procedural responsibilities or consequences that would make consultation transparent, consistent and verifiable. Owners are left to prove one-sided compliance with an act and there's no responsibility on the residents committee to do the same.

If the intention of the bill is to prescribe meaningful resident consultation and dialogue with park owners, then a basic requirement for written communication on all sides would strengthen that objective. As it stands, it risks conflagrating a dispute if there's no permanent record of what questions were asked and any dialogue that may have occurred. For example, one of the committee members walks past the owner day by day, says something to them about an issue, no record of that, so when it comes up, that person can say, 'Well, I spoke to the manager about that and nothing's occurred.' But there's nothing in writing, there's no record. That needs to be tightened up, I think, or it needs to be looked at and addressed.

I want to draw members' attention to the abandoned property provisions in the bill. With the best will in the world, park owners are often left with the need to sort out what happens with property that a resident may leave behind, either intentionally or through no fault of their own if they have to leave for health reasons or if they pass away. It's interesting, I wasn't going to say it, but my sister, who's a couple of years younger than me, has had five deaths in the park and she's not trained in that. Somebody will say, 'So-and-so hasn't been seen for two days,' then my sister goes over, knocks on the caravan, then has to go in and there's a body. That's an issue that I don't think people - or, I'm not going to say young people - people come to the park, my brother and sister say, 'Look, put your tent here. Be here for as long as you like till you get yourself sorted,' four days later in the middle of the night, they scamper and leave their stuff around. The park owner is left to figure out what to do with their property.

Like so much in the bill, the provisions defining and controlling the management and disposal of abandoned property are quite onerous for park owners. The definitions are vague enough to excite a no-win, no-fee lawyer and rely on a degree of subjective decision-making by the park owner with judicial penalties if they get it wrong or make an inadvertent error in the various complex notices and tribunal processes.

I'd like to move on to the requirements in section 89 relating to what it loosely calls 'valuable abandoned property'. It's a term defined by default as not being covered under previous categories and comes with four pages of 'must' and 'should' clauses written into the bill with penalties attached. If we take one part, the process of giving notice to the departed owner, it could have been written in the middle of the last century. If the park owner doesn't have a forwarding address for the relevant resident, they are obligated to publish a notice in a newspaper. Are we really going back to that? Will a post on a park or local chitchat social media page not suffice? Or a simple text message to the former resident on the mobile number they registered with? Could even notifying a secondary contact, including an agreement, be another option?

The other issue is storage, where the owner is obligated to keep such property safe and on site until it can be returned to its owner, sold or disposed of, or until the tribunal determines a possession order. Whose issue is it if the property is inadvertently damaged or stolen whilst being stored? The risk currently falls on the park owner to prove a negative, to demonstrate they have complied with every aspect of the legislation relating to abandoned property.

The bill also states that, if the undefined valuable property is not claimed within the specific notice periods, it must be sold by public auction. On paper, 50 years ago that may have appeared to be an orderly and transparent process, but in the modern-day real world of residential parks, it is neither practical nor proportionate. Public auctions are expensive. They require advertising, auctioneer fees, compliance steps and often transport and preparation of the goods. In many cases the cost of running the auction will exceed the value of the property itself and for park owners, particularly small family-run parks, these are not theoretical burdens. These are real out-of-pocket expenses imposed by the bill with no guarantee of recovering any of it. The bill already requires to store the property, secure it, notify the former resident and keep detailed records. Adding an enforced auction on top of that creates a compliance regime that is heavy-handed and costly.

There is an opportunity to include a phrase used in such other jurisdictions to have the property 'sold by public auction or in such other manner as the park owner sees fit', so there is a way of assisting. It's an additional phrase that allows a reasonable degree of flexibility on the part of the park owner. So much of the bill relies on the application and interpretation of reasonableness, and given those precedents, it would be a sensible addition.

What it does is recognise is the reality that an old fridge, outdoor setting or a bicycle does not justify a full auction process. In fact, the park owner may find an auctioneer rejecting low-value lots, or maybe not even receiving a bid and having to pay for its disposal. A degree of reasonable flexibility would allow park owners to use a local dealer, an online marketplace or a private sale, all of which may achieve a better net return for the former resident and at a fraction of the cost. It will also reduce the administrative burden, reduce disputes and allow parks to operate effectively without comprising fairness or due process.

Another issue within the bill is the arrangements following the death of a resident. Section 32 insists that the agreement continues until any dwelling on the site is sold according to the act. It's a clause that naturally means the deceased resident's estate will have a continuing liability to pay rent on the site following the death of a resident. So far so good; however, if the deceased resident's estate is waiting for probate to be granted, what then?

I know of a still-to-be-resolved issue where a deceased resident's estate has been waiting for probate for 18 months, with growing rent arrears on their dwelling that remain unpaid. The deceased's family are in limbo. The park owners are in limbo, as the dwelling cannot be sold or transferred until probate is granted, and it's likely that the condition of the dwelling may well be deteriorating. Both parties in this case would like to get it sorted, but their hands are tied. What can the government do to support the family and park owners to resolve the issue? Can there be specific provisions made in the bill or its regulations to allow a dwelling to be sold in such circumstances, and the proceeds held by the director until the estate is settled?

The current reprint of the bill comes in at 146 pages, one that's grown by 12 pages with amendments from the other place. I assume it can only be expanded with our own possible changes. There are parts of the bill that are written in plain English, using language and terms that are easily understood. There are also sections drafted in perfect legalese that must be fairly opaque to even the sharpest of legal-linguistic minds. As a perfect example of impenetrable legalese, I draw honourable members' attention to Part 3, Division 4 of the bill, with its six clauses relating to the continuation or reissue of certain agreements. I read that and I went, 'Help!'

Our role in this place is to review legislation to make sure it functions properly and does not bring any unreasonable changes to our community and Tasmania as a whole. As such, it must be drafted in a form that can be reasonably understood and applied by those whom it may affect, whilst also meeting the requirements of the legal process. The result is often a style of legalese and phrasing that appears to be back-to-front, the absence of something that can be described a clause. The definition of 'valuable abandoned property' in section 89(1) is a perfect example. It doesn't say what it is other than to say what it's not.

My concern - and it's not a criticism of the bill but trying to make the legislation as strong and as workable as possible - is how residents and park owners will come to understand the implications for them within the bill's 146 pages of complex verbiage, complete with its statutory processes, notice periods and penalties. Yes, there is a transition period, but from the bill's commencement its rules will be enacted.

I must ask the government what support and advice will be made available for residents and park owners to help them get it right. I think everybody wants to get it right. Both sides will still want to be sure that they're doing the right thing. Besides drafting notice templates, will the director have powers to establish a helpline and navigated services for all parks in park agreements, and with ongoing support for new agreement signatories?

Residents may well have greater trust in community legal services, and given their own funding challenges, will the government allocate additional funding and training for community legal services to best help their clients to come to them for advice on the new agreements and arrangements? On the other side, will the Property Council get the same support to help its members that may be park owners? I must put on the record that it was pleasing to hear in the briefings today, when we were told there were going to be a number of strategies being considered and highlighted in the briefing, and I'm certain the Leader might reinforce some of those in her closing debates, I was heartened by that; but as I said earlier, I had the speech written a couple of days ago.

The bill is rightly seeking to bring a degree of certainty and consistency in the operation of residential parks for the benefit of both residents and park owners. While the bill is complex

and attempts to foreshadow future points of contention, the need for safe and reasonably priced homes has never been greater. We only have to see the growing interest in mini-homes and container homes, and the problems such owners have with meeting council regulations to site them, to realise that residential parks have a huge potential to address the urgent need for new housing.

I just want to put it in context: I think my brother's place has about 69 or 70 permanent residents. That's a lot of people. It's a community and it's one that they've worked really hard on to make a good community. I think that it's hard work when you've got people coming in and out, and in all different stages of their life, and all different emotional states. My brother and sister do the very best they can to help that person fit into the community and be part of that community. With constantly growing waitlists for public housing, residential parks serve an unmet community need, be it for older residents seeking a benevolent community in which they can maintain their independence, to single people seeking a new start, or for those who simply cannot afford to own their own home and the land it's built on.

Residential parks are the dignified option for people who need a place to call their own. I would welcome the opportunity in the transitional arrangements for the government to consider how residential parks could be better incorporated into the Tasmanian Planning Scheme as a sensible option for lower-cost housing, and give councils greater confidence in their operation.

As an aside, I've been working on a vegetable garden. All the vegetables go to my sister, who puts them on the bench in the main living area, and people from the park come and help themselves. Any of the clothes that we have in our family, we go and put on there and they take it. It's a real community thing and that's what they do, and I think it's important that we understand that they work on a community basis.

Three weeks ago my brother - he's a muso, he's very good, I have no musical ability, he plays the saxophone, guitar, he sings - he and his mate put on a free concert at the park, and all the people from the park come and they join in. Even more come because he puts the drink on for free, too: good brother. It's that building. But some people in the park don't want to be included. They don't want that contact. They just want to be left alone. They have their own little garden, they have their own little veggie patch, and that's how they relate to one another. But they look out for one another, and it's really important that we don't lose sight of that. We do hear of the situations where there are bad experiences, as there are bad experiences in neighbourhoods, as there are disputes between neighbours. There are also disputes, but living in a confined space as such, and having onsite tents, campervans on powered sites and non-powered sites, communal blocks, that sort of thing, it's a different place of living.

I'd like to close by reflecting on my brother's perspective as a park owner. He came into it after finishing up as CEO of Youth and Family Focus. After a lifetime of involvement in community development, supporting homeless youth, suicide prevention and family drug support, perhaps being a park owner has allowed him to fully develop the caring community that is his residential park and one that all the residents can call home. In discussions around the bill, I would like to share an excerpt of an email sent to me by somebody who has worked with my brother Wayne for many years. He said:

> I also felt the need to share this with you, my own personal experience with the caravan park and Wayne. In one of my early conversations with Wayne,

> roughly 14 years ago, he said to me, 'I want everyone who has anything to do with the caravan park to do well out of it.' A comment I've never forgotten. At the time I took this comment as being pointed at his family and at any other caravan park employees. I quickly realised this comment referred to not only the family and the employees, but also included everyone who resided at the park, local Somerset and greater north-west coast businesses, and lots of other individual people along the way.

He goes on to say:

> I guess I've heard these kinds of comments before from various people, but with Wayne and Jacks it was different. More than just a passing comment, it is the reality. If asked, anyone who resides at the park would agree that it is a cheap, easy and friendly place to put a roof over your head in sometimes trying circumstances. It really is a fantastic small community that could continue as such for many years to come.

I think that sums up the perspective of park owners who are in it for the right reasons. I do not think you can be a successful operator unless you genuinely like people, where you give more than you take. That is not talking about money, it is talking about giving someone a leg up and time when they need it - a listening ear that is free from judgement and being a proper Tasmanian who looks out for others.

There are parts of the bill that I think can still be improved, but that is why we have this place. Whether that is by amendment or in the regulations and its implementation, I am sure that they will come up as we debate the bill, and I look forward to seeing what they might be. I am certain I have raised some issues that are already covered in the bill. I just could not figure out the terminology.

I commend the government for bringing it on in a timely manner, and in the way that will fully support park owners and their residents and may yet forestall ongoing legal challenges. My brother's property is on five blocks, or five parcels of land. It would be very easy for him to sell that beachfront property on that place. He does not want to do that, so we have to be sure because 80 people, 80 families, are going to be displaced.

In closing, thank you for the opportunity and I will say publicly before I close, my last opportunity to wish both the member for Huon and the member for Rosevears all the very best in the upcoming elections.

[4.07 p.m.]

Mr VINCENT (Prosser - Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council) - I rise to speak on the Residential Parks Bill 2026 and although I have not got a colourful slave labour family member story like the member for Mersey, I think most of us in Tasmania have an understanding of this. I can remember when this first came forward as a subject I thought, I can understand how this situation has occurred and did not give it much thought. As we progressed through the situation it became more and more obvious that this was an issue that needed addressing, and I am really pleased to stand here today and talk about the Residential Parks Bill.

During the 2025 election, the Tasmanian government committed to introduce legislation within our first 200 days to provide clear legal rights and protection for long-term caravan park residents, many of whom currently lack basic tenancy protection. I am pleased the bill establishes a range of rights and obligations on park owners and long-term residents in these parks. This balance is very important to me.

I acknowledge the work that has gone into bringing this legislation forward, in particular the lived experience of long-term residents of caravan and residential parks who have strongly advocated for clearer and fairer protections.

When you look at some of these caravan parks and what they do, and the member for Mersey touched on it fantastically well, they are much more than just a caravan park or a residential park, when you walk around them and you stop to talk to various friends. Each of these tightly woven units or homes all represent a unique part of the people who live there and their lives. When you see massive caravans and everybody has their own little attachment or their stickers on where they've been, when you walk around some of these parks and see everybody's little badge of honour on their residence, you understand what it means. Certainly, in a couple of them where I go to visit friends you notice very quickly when somebody has moved or passed on or moved away from these parks because it's quite noticeable - the fishing rods leaning up against the front door, or their little bike that they ride to the shop on, or the kayak that hasn't been used in 20 years covered in spider webs with the fibreglass paddle blistering against the thing, and all the various seashells and driftwood they pick up and bring home. It's very personalised and you very quickly understand that these are more than just homes. These are small communities within communities. When I've spoken over the years to many park operators, they see it that way too. It's a way of life for them in their thongs, t-shirt and shorts. It's the most informal dress uniform that is around for these people to run their parks. They have their own community of like in amongst some very colourful characters of every part of our community there.

The friendships, networking and protection that these villages, caravan parks and residential parks offer to these residents is quite staggering when you look at the fabric of the community that's within them. They deliver benefits of mental health and security to so many of these residents which cost a fortune to do outside of these parks. We should not forget that.

It is clear that the current arrangements governing long-term residents of caravan and residential parks are fragmented and, in many cases, inadequate. Residents often own their dwellings, but not the land beneath them, and they fall outside the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997* and rely on contracts that offer limited security or clarity.

This bill seeks to address the gap by establishing a tailored statutory framework for long term residential park agreements. Rather than forcing these agreements into existing tenancy law, the bill acknowledges their unique character and attempts to regulate them on their own terms. In principle, that approach is sensible and overdue.

The bill provides that a register of residential parks is maintained by Consumer Building and Occupational Services within the Department of Justice. CBOS will be able to add parks as well as remove parks from the register where they no longer have residents under such an agreement.

A park that has one or more residential park agreements is legally required to register with CBOS. The bill applies where a site is, or is intended to be, a resident's principal place of residence and where occupation extends to 90 days or more, including through community agreements. I welcome the creation of a presumption that the occupation of 90 days brings an agreement within the scope of the act, as this will help prevent agreements being structured or labelled in ways that circumvent residents' protection.

At the same time, the bill clearly excludes genuine holiday accommodation, standard residential tenancies, and a range of other specialist accommodation settings. Now, I noticed with these clauses that this does give protection and offer the difference between the many and varied residents who occupy these areas. I think it's very important to make sure we define who we are looking after in this bill.

The bill appropriately assigns the Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal a broad supervision and corrective role. Within the bill, TASCAT is empowered not only to resolve disputes after they arise, but to act as a safeguard against the misuse. This includes reviewing rent increases alleged to be excessive, determining whether park rules are unreasonable, overseeing terminations, and adjudicating disputes about transfers and abandoned property. Of particular importance is TASCAT's capability to scrutinise alleged retaliatory conduct by park owners. Once again, this is about pure protection and it covers a lot of different areas where problems have occurred and there haven't been suitable methods for residents to pursue things in a sensible way.

An important feature of the bill is the introduction of mandatory written residential park agreements and statutory terms that cannot be contracted out of. These provisions establish a baseline of rights and obligations, including rights to quiet enjoyment - sometimes they're not so quiet, but most of the time they're very quiet - access to the park and common areas, and limitation on the charges that may be imposed on residents. These are all things that we have seen listed in some of the issues that have arisen in recent times.

For many residents who have historically relied on informal or somewhat casual agreements, these requirements will significantly improve clarity and fairness. The provisions relating to rents and charges are particularly relevant. Limits on the frequency of rent increases, requirements for notice, and the ability for residents to challenge excessive increases before the tribunal reflect principles already familiar in residential tenancy law.

Sensibly, the bill also recognises that for many residents, their dwelling is their most significant financial asset and it affirms the right of residents to sell dwellings located on their sites, regulates first option purchase rights for the park owners, which is also very important, and makes it an offence to unreasonably hinder sales and inspections. I know quite a few people who live in these circumstances, and it is their home, it is their palace, just like anybody else's home. To have these things protected and understood, even though there are limitations, I fully respect, while still fully respecting the rights of the caravan park owner.

Security of occupation is another key theme. The bill does not permit termination of residential park agreements without grounds, aligning these agreements more closely with the protections afforded to residential tenants. Termination is confined to defined circumstances: serious misconduct, redevelopment or change of use, and the end of certain fixed-term agreements. Where redevelopment is proposed, the obligations on park owners to offer a relocation or compensation reflect an attempt to balance the redevelopment rights with the

disruption faced by residents. I noticed the member for Mersey talked about his brother's passion in retaining, for the purpose of those 80 residents, significant sites that could be financially rewarding to sell.

I've noticed this with a lot of park operators, sometimes the same things that the member of the Mersey raised: the pressures of escalating rates and insurance premiums putting them into a difficult position where they have to sell. I'm really pleased that this has a protection factor in there for both sides of this, and that there is a way to work through this. A property being redeveloped or being sold for a multitude of reasons takes time, and this allows for a very sensible way forward to make sure all parties have a mechanism to be able to deal with that.

Ms Rattray - That's the 180 days.

Mr VINCENT - This is what I like about this bill: that it addresses so many parts of that on a good basis. TASCAT's oversight safeguards against misuse and compensates where notices are issued without reasonable grounds. Of particular significance are the anti-retaliation provisions that allow TASCAT to scrutinise where termination and possession action has been taken in response to a resident asserting their lawful rights or making a complaint. This is a strong and deliberate policy choice and one that speaks directly to concerns raised by residents during consultation.

The formal recognition of residents committees is another welcoming inclusion. They have their own little network. They all like to have a committee meeting sometimes, so this is good, if they feel they have that need. By providing a structured avenue for collective representation, consultation on park rules and required written responses from owners, the bill supports more constructive engagement within parks and may assist in resolving issues before they escalate into disputes.

Being in a crowded environment like that, it's very important that you have these mechanisms. I have spoken to a park owner who thinks this would be a great provision. It is done informally now over a beer or over the familiarity of long-term residents and the park owner, but sometimes that is not possible and this gives a mechanism for that to be done in a sensible way.

The amendments made during the consideration of this bill in the other place strengthen that tailored statutory framework. They reflect the constructive engagement between the government, stakeholders and members of the House of Assembly, and they help ensure the legislation strikes an appropriate balance.

In particular, I feel the amendments enhance clarity around rights and obligations, improve safeguards in relation to eviction processes and reinforce accessibility pathways for dispute resolution. These are particular changes that will make a real difference to residents while also providing certainty for park operators. There are some very positive steps in that. I acknowledge the contributions made in the other place and indicate my support for the bill in its amended form.

In conclusion, this bill represents a substantial and carefully constructed reform in an area that for so long has been marked by uncertainty. It aims to provide meaningful protections for residents, while recognising the legitimate interests of park owners, and this balance is very important to myself and many others.

I commend the bill to the Council.

[4.23 p.m.]

Mr DUIGAN (Windermere) - Mr President, I rise to speak in strong support of the Residential Parks Bill 2026. At its heart, this bill is about fairness, clarity and dignity for Tasmanians who call residential parks home, and it is also about providing certainty and consistency for park owners who operate these facilities across our state.

This bill ensures that long-term residents of caravan and residential parks no longer have to navigate a confusing legal framework. Previously, the rights and obligations of park residents and owners have been scattered across contract law, consumer law, planning rules, building standards and a range of other regulatory frameworks, often without the basic protections that most Tasmanians reasonably expect when a place is their principal home. Many of these residents are older Tasmanians, people on fixed incomes or those who have chosen residential parks as an affordable and stable housing option. These people are not holiday makers, they are not short-term visitors and this bill recognises that reality.

As others have already done during the debate, I want to recognise and thank the residents of the Beauty Point Caravan Park whose contributions and feedback have helped shape this legislation in a very real and practical way. I have spent time at the Beauty Point Bowls Club and met with residents of Beauty Point Caravan Park and acknowledge their long, and to that point, ongoing work in seeing this legislation come to fruition. The current and former residents of Beauty Point have engaged constructively and persistently with the government throughout the development of this bill. They took the time to articulate the challenges faced by long-term residents living under uncertain and inconsistent arrangements, and they did so in a manner focused on achieving better and fairer outcomes. Their detailed submissions and willingness to share personal experiences provided invaluable insight into how the absence of clear legal protections can affect people's sense of security, stability and dignity in what is, for all intents and purposes, their home.

I would also commend the Attorney-General for bringing this bill to parliament, and for his work over the past two years engaging with the community and developing these reforms.

The voices of the Beauty Point residents are reflected in key elements of this bill, including stronger security of tenure, fair processes around termination, the right to sell a dwelling or structure, access protections and proper avenues for dispute resolution. This bill is stronger because of their contribution, and their advocacy stands as an excellent example of how community engagement can lead to better public policy.

The Residential Parks Bill 2026 delivers on our government's election commitment to introduce legislation that provides long-term residential park residents with meaningful legal rights and protections within our first 200 days. It does so in a balanced and carefully considered way. Our government is delivering for Tasmania.

The bill captures agreements of 90 days or more where the site is the resident's principal place of residence, including where multiple shorter agreements exceed that threshold. At the same time, it sensibly excludes holiday stays, hotels and motels, retirement villages, boarding arrangements and traditional residential tenancies under the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997*. This is targeted legislation, but not a blunt instrument.

The bill establishes a clear mandatory requirement for residential park agreements. Agreements must be in writing, key information must be provided before signing, and residents must understand what charges apply, what services are included and what park rules will govern their occupancy.

For residents, the bill clarifies expected standards of behaviour, responsibilities for guests, obligations to keep sites in reasonable conditions, and requirements around rent and permitted charges. For park owners, it equally clarifies rights and obligations, including rent setting, security, deposit limits, repairs, access to sites, park rules and the handling of abandoned property, all within a transparent and enforceable framework. This balance matters.

Our government recognises the vital role residential parks play in housing affordability and supporting Tasmania's visitor economy. This bill does not undermine that role, it strengthens it by providing certainty and a contemporary legal framework that reduces conflict, protects investment and supports constructive relationships.

The bill also introduces important consumer protections that align with community expectations. The bill prohibits no-grounds terminations, security deposit amounts are capped, and limited grounds for retention are clearly set out. Residents can only be charged for water and electricity where separate metering exists. Where services form part of an agreement, park owners must take reasonable steps to ensure those services are maintained. These are reasonable, commonsense protections.

I also want to highlight the importance of the dispute resolution framework established under the bill. Both residents and park operators will have access to the Tasmanian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (TASCAT), to resolve disputes relating to rent increases, to park rules, transfer of agreements, abandoned property and termination matters. The right to take a matter to TASCAT provides residents and operators with an independent, accessible forum to resolve issues before they escalate, and it replaces uncertainty with fairness and due process.

Critically, the bill empowers TASCAT to consider whether an action has been taken in retaliation for a resident asserting their rights. Where that occurs, the tribunal can intervene to prevent unfair outcomes. That safeguard alone will make a meaningful difference to people's lives.

The bill also recognises the value of resident engagement by allowing for a residents committee in parks with a sufficient number of long-term residents. These committees provide a structured and respectful way for residents and owners to communicate and resolve issues, strengthening community cohesion within parks.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the extensive consultation that informed this bill. The government listened to the community. It refined the draft legislation and made sensible amendments to improve rights of access, protect services, facilitate the sale of dwellings, remove no-grounds termination and ensure reasonable timeframes. That consultation included residents, park owners, advocacy groups, local government and industry bodies. Their contributions have resulted in better legislation.

This bill delivers what it promises: clear rights for long-term residents, certainty and fairness for park owners, a modern regulatory framework that reflects how people actually live, and a balanced approach that supports housing affordability across Tasmania.

I commend the Residential Parks Bill 2026 to the Council.

[4.32 p.m.]

Ms FORREST (Murchison) - Mr President, as I indicated in the briefing, it seems no-one else is ready to proceed. I am asking, is it the Leader's intention to adjourn?

Ms Rattray - Yes, but there are other members ready to go. The honourable member for Nelson is willing to make a start. Thank you for checking.

Mr PRESIDENT - We will treat that as a point of clarification.

Ms WEBB (Nelson) - Mr President, I rise to speak on the Residential Parks Bill 2026, and it will be a start because I am not entirely ready to give a considered contribution on the bill as yet. We did have the benefit of an excellent briefing earlier today, and I thank the department staff for providing that. I do feel now I am able to begin some remarks about it and share some thoughts on my views on the bill. It is such an interesting topic. I have not delved into this area and this rather unique housing type in great detail before. It has brought things to my attention that I was not previously fully aware of. Clearly what we have got here is potentially a very complex set of circumstances around this form of housing.

I would definitely start by saying that I am a firm believer, and many here would have heard me speak before in different contexts, on my firm support for human rights and protecting the human rights of Tasmanians via a human rights act. One of the key human rights that would be enshrined in such an act would be a right to housing, because housing is fundamental. It is absolutely foundational to a good life. Everything else that you might need to be participating in or having as aspects of your life, whether it is family life, whether it is health and wellbeing, whether it is employment, education, whatever, it all has to have a foundation of a safe and secure home. So, housing tenures are critical to whether we are delivering on that human right in our state. This is an interesting circumstance, because from some perspectives, there will be cases where the housing tenure we're talking about here, where we've got a permanent-ish dwelling in a caravan park environment, for some that is a long-term, safe, secure housing opportunity, and for others it's a more temporary housing opportunity that isn't necessarily secure and able to be contemplated as a long-term option. It's potentially quite a highly vulnerable housing tenure to be in for Tasmanians.

I think it's quite fascinating, as we've learnt through considering this bill - and from discussions in our briefings and the like, and from what's been said here - it's quite fascinating that we haven't really had a clear line of sight on exactly how many Tasmanians might live in these circumstances. We get some information through census data that's not necessarily fully reflective of what might be the reality out there across our state in different communities, and that tells us something, too. When we don't fully know the circumstances around something that's very fundamental, like a particular housing tenure, it's likely we might not be fully aware of what's required there in terms of not just rules and regulations and that sort of strict side of it, but also perhaps support and services that might be needed in those spaces as well.

This is, I think, really valuable on a few fronts. It's a valuable bill because, as the leader mentioned in the government's second reading speech, we've had quite a tapestry of arrangements and some uncertainty around how those knit together. What we're tackling here is trying to put in place something much clearer and more comprehensive, something that's

much fairer and more reasonable, which provides protections but also provides confidence for everybody involved, and that's really valuable. It is surprising it's taken us this long, in a way.

Here we are. What I'm gathering as I've been contemplating and grappling with this bill - because it's a quite lengthy bill and quite complex, as the member for Mersey mentioned; it's got a lot of legalese, I think that was the term he used at some stage - is that there's a lot of detail in the bill, but it does come to provide for us something that's at least consistent and clear as a framework and that will better protect everybody involved. It will better protect those people who are residing in this form of housing tenure, ensuring their rights are respected and at least clear. It will better protect the park owners and the people who are offering these agreements for the land on which the dwellings are located. I think from all sides it should be a win-win.

Of course my interest is always going to be: are we also better supporting and protecting the people in any given circumstance who might be in the more powerless situation? For me, that's probably always going to be tenants or people who are not the asset owners. In this case, we've got a funny mix of asset owning, don't we? We've got the land on which the dwelling exists, with the park owner owning that, and then we've got the person who has a dwelling on it, which is sort of temporary, but also becoming more permanent and long-term as bits are added to it. That's an asset to own, too. You've got assets owned on both sides, but in some ways the person who owns the land is always going to be in the more powerful position.

This helps to clarify and ensure that that interplay of power doesn't get unbalanced or go in the wrong direction. I'm quite pleased about that. Certainly the protections around having to have agreements in writing, that's a really basic, straightforward requirement, and arrangements around how agreements might be terminated between the two parties are a really important set of structures to put in place to provide protections.

One of the things I was quite pleased to hear about in a bit more detail in the briefing was the fact that the process to develop this bill has been quite comprehensive. I think we're all aware that there were a few things that have been occurring in certain communities and in certain particular caravan park environments that have prompted us having to go down the path of getting this sorted out, but the process has been quite comprehensive by the look of things. We've had a look at other jurisdictions and identified South Australia as a model that had a lot of useful elements to build on, taken that and adapted it to circumstances here. The exposure draft has gone out. There's been a lot of engagement with that and worthwhile engagement because we've also heard that changes and improvements were made as a result of that consultation.

What we've arrived at now even in this place, having come through the other place and having some more amendments made, is a bill that has gone through a fairly rigorous process and come here for us to contemplate. That's why it does quite well to get the balance right and to get those protections in place.

As it goes through this place, if and when down the track we get to the Committee stage, I think there are even further amendments to consider, not from me but by the sound of it, from the government and perhaps others. We will have an opportunity to consider some nuances and some potential improvements, and that's even better.

As I was saying, the particular strengths here that make my ears prick up, or catch my eye as I'm going through, relate to protections on termination. We know that people who entered into agreements about the place where they live, whether that's under the *Residential Tenancy Act* or whether it's under agreements that are detailed in this bill, are quite vulnerable, particularly at the time if there isn't clarity around grounds on which they can be terminated under that agreement.

To see here laid out quite clearly and quite reasonably circumstances under which that can happen, and most importantly, to see included in the bill the appeal facility to go to TASCAT and have disputes resolved or have an appeal level provides administrative justice to people involved so that not only do they have clarity in what will be the rules on this, but they have somewhere to take that if they dispute what's being done in their circumstance. That's a really positive development, too.

I do note the government indicates it certainly was the aim that this bill wouldn't introduce measures that were too burdensome for park owners. That's a reasonable aim to have with this bill. I found it quite interesting to hear the member for Mersey, in his contribution, talk about his family member who is a park owner and operates in this area, and in fact has a large community of permanent residents in different types of dwellings on his property.

That was really interesting to hear about, particularly what sounds like the lengths that that he and his family go to to ensure that community is a safe and supportive community, one that engages with each other in a really positive way and supports each other. What that shows is, and it's probably not an uncommon story, that there would be a lot of very well-intentioned and very responsible and caring park owners. But, of course, we can't legislate on the basis of assuming everybody is going to be like the member for Mersey's family member.

What we do need to have is circumstances that somewhat assume the opposite might be the case and we might have to protect against it.

Mr Gaffney - Sometimes they are not really nice.

Ms WEBB - This is the world we live in.

Mr Gaffney - It's not my brother I'm talking about.

Ms WEBB - We're not reflecting on your brother in any negative way. What we need to see is that we're not imposing things that are too burdensome and assuming everybody is going to be terrible, but we have to accommodate the fact there will need to be relatively clear and relatively easily enforceable rules on protections. As I said, the power dynamic is an important factor there for sure.

I do note again too - and this is very positive from both sides - more structured arrangements on what we would call a bond, but I think in here it's called a security deposit. Formalising the fact that now needs to be collected but lodged in a central way through CBOS, like we do under the *Residential Tenancy Act* for market rental arrangements. It makes a great deal of sense to have that more formalised at arm's length from the park owner, and a very clear set of rules on the basis on which you might have some security deposit withheld. The circumstances that can apply to, of course, can't be exactly like we have under the *Residential Tenancy Act* because the dynamic is a little different, but the bill spells out quite clearly those

elements that can come into play when somebody wants to retain some security deposit for certain matters. Certainly, if people have left a great deal of detritus around the dwelling when they've come to the end of the agreement and have moved on, that's going to be problematic. Anything within the dwelling or for the dwelling itself, of course, is the responsibility of the owner of the dwelling. If somebody has sold their dwelling that's on the new owner, but if they've left the lease agreement at a time that they've left a total mess around it on the property on the land, then that's going to be something, for example, that's a basis on which to withhold some security deposit, I gather from the bill.

I find the government has been quite responsive in terms of tweaks made, amendments made in the other place that related to a staged commencement of bringing into play and implementing these rules on security deposits. That's sensible because we do need to set up admin systems in order to appropriately implement what's in the bill. I understand why that's put in as not being switched on straightaway on royal assent but will come in as a staged commencement. I think we've given ourselves six months to do that potentially, or the intention is for it to be that period of time.

Another interesting aspect of the bill, because again it's quite unique to these sorts of circumstances and isn't mirrored in the *Residential Tenancy Act*, was on the matters in the bill that relate to residents committees. That's quite a fascinating situation with residents' committees that the bill establishes not only that they can exist, but there are sort of some expectations that the park owner must take measures to encourage and support them to exist and can be penalised for not doing that. It must take all reasonable measures to ensure that if there are more than five agreements relating to these residences on their property, that a residents' committee can be established. It's an interesting thing to have a penalty in a bill for somebody to have to take steps to ensure a committee comes about they themselves aren't going to be a member of. They can't go and obviously twist arms and tell people they must be a committee member, but they must at least take steps to encourage that to happen and to facilitate it to happen.

Ms Rattray - All reasonable steps.

Ms WEBB - All reasonable steps, practical things like having a meeting room sufficient for people to meet in as a committee, making sure that information about a committee is available to all relevant residents. I assume there's probably a short list of other things that might be regarded as reasonable steps as specified in the bill. It does make sense that residents committees would be a valuable aspect of this sort of arrangement. I can imagine in the larger sort of parks, such as the one the member for Mersey spoke about with his brother, where there was, he mentioned 70 or 80 residences there, then you could have a very substantial, very vocal residents committee, no doubt with a serious bit of heft behind it when you bring potentially 50 different residents' voices together. Providing a meeting space for them would be an interesting challenge in and of itself. But it does mean that matters can be considered by a group then, concerns can be addressed and brought forward by a group, which is interesting. In that dynamic between the park owner and the residents who are entered into agreements for these dwellings, we can see that would have a lot of benefits.

I do note that in the bill, it establishes in clause 91 that park rules can be made, and it suggests some areas that park rules could be made in. Let me just bring that to my mind so I can make a couple of comments about that.

What I'm imagining, and I think this is true of a lot of the bill, to some extent the bill is likely to be codifying what many well-intentioned, reasonable, competent park owners and residents are doing already in these arrangements between them. Of course, it doesn't hurt to codify it and it doesn't hurt to make sure that there are avenues of recourse if things go astray. We know in the dynamics between groups of people there is always the possibility for things to go astray.

I think the provision for the park owner to make rules for the use, enjoyment, control and management of their park is a good thing to have stated and codified here. It does, however, then limit the list of things that the rules may be able to be made about. I think that's useful too, because sometimes - I don't know what it's like in your house, Mr President, but sometimes it can be handy, especially when children are younger, to make up rules to suit you as a parent as you go along to help manage behaviour. So a rule that did not exist yesterday might come into play. Sometimes, if you are in a position of power and you are able to make up the rules a little bit as you go along, that can be inappropriately punitive. It can be a way of actually forcing people out, or it could be a way of making people's lives very difficult, so that they feel they need to go. That is the sort of behaviour I presume we are trying to address here by outlining the areas that rules can be made on.

One that jumped out and got a little bit of discussion in the briefing was around the keeping of pets. It's worth noting here that, unlike what we have recently done under our *Residential Tenancy Act* - very laudably and finally in keeping with other jurisdictions, we have now in our private rental market under our *Residential Tenancy Act* made it so that the presumption is you can have a pet in a private rental lease, unless there are certain circumstances where that may not be allowed, and those are fairly closely prescribed circumstances. Here, there is not going to be an onus that there must be a presumption that there can be pets accommodated in these dwellings as part of these agreements. However, the park may set its rules around that and then it may be individually, park by park, something that parks allow. I think that's sensible.

I am a big proponent of the fact that people should be able to have pets where they are living if it is appropriate for them to have pets and they dearly wish to. It's a very positive health and wellbeing measure for households to have pets as part of their family. We all know that a lot of good can come of that. But, given that what we are doing here is a bit of a first step towards addressing this strange tapestry of things and trying to make it into a cohesive set of rules and approaches, this is probably a step one. Once we get this in place, see that it's working well, find out what we do not know and haven't done yet to formalise it appropriately, and get it straightened out, the issue of perhaps a presumptive obligation to allow pets might come down the track, when we can get a better line of sight on what that might best look like or how best to frame that in this context. I would still be hopeful that we might end up at a place that wherever possible, Tasmanians living in whatever housing tenure they live in can have a right to have a pet as part of their home, as long as we've accommodated the exceptions that need to be there in different circumstances as well. That might come.

It will be interesting to see - and I don't know that it came up in the briefings, perhaps because I've had a fairly cursory look at the bill so far. I might have missed it and this could be a question that can be answered later when we finally get to a summing up one day on this bill: is there intended to be some form of review or assessment of this legislation a certain distance into the future? It might not be something that is a legislative review formalised in the bill, but perhaps the government can indicate whether there is an intention. How will we know how this

is going as we implement it? How will we make an assessment at an appropriate distance in the future on whether it has successfully achieved what we would want it to achieve, what the stated goals were? Is that something that's planned and if so, how might it happen? That would be useful to hear back about in the Leader's summing-up down the track.

There's some really practical things in this bill. I'll point to one that I really like, again, because it's a protection of potentially vulnerable people in these circumstances. That is, that the bill formalises things like the fact that there can't be extra charges laid on additional things and brought in down the track unexpectedly for people, or used to be punitive, or to try to drive somebody out by adding extra costs to things. That's really good. For example, they can't just decide to start charging extra because you happen to have visitors arriving at different times, or if you want to have a tradesperson come in and do work in your house, or whatever it might be. That can't happen under this bill and I think those sorts of practical protections are important.

The other thing I was pleased to hear - and it did get some discussion and the member for Mersey pointed to it very clearly and it was raised in the briefings - is that because this is a fairly substantial piece of legislation with a lot of complexity to it, it will have to be brought into the real world and understood and utilised by at least the two groups of people directly impacted: the park owners and residents or potential residents in these dwellings. We will need to have very good resources, accessible plain-language resources, in different formats for people to be able to understand their rights and obligations, and how things will work.

I note that there's going to be a range of standard materials developed flowing from this bill. There'll be some standard agreements available and accessible for people to utilise if they wish to do so, so that not everyone has to figure out if what they've drawn up aligns with the requirements of the act. There will be something that CBOS can provide to people as the stock-standard that they can adapt if they need to but that meets the requirements of the act. Other sorts of fact sheets, other sorts of information provided, whether that's via little videos or social media - I believe there's an intention for there to be some sort of advice line or phone number that can be called for people if they have questions - all of that's really useful and important.

It will be very interesting down the track if we are assessing how this is tracking and whether it's achieving its aims. I'll be particularly interested to hear what feedback has come back from both those key stakeholder groups, the park owners and also the residents in these circumstances. Although we did have in recent years examples where there were certain contentious things going on that prompted this to come about, what we hope is that, once it's in place, it not only helps things work well but it's preventive in not having contentious situations arise again. I'll be interested to see whether both sides of the equation feel that the bill is achieving those ends as we get further down the track with it being in place.

There's no doubt that there might be other things I'd like to say on this bill, but I have not yet quite formulated them because I haven't had a fully comprehensive look. It certainly is a bill that, to my mind, because of its complexity and size, will take us a bit of time in the Committee stage, should it go through to the Committee stage, as I expect it will. It will be a valuable service that this Chamber does in our Committee stage on this bill to get the right amount of clarity and the right amount of information on the parliamentary record as we go through the bill clause by clause. I'll be pleased certainly to have more time available to prepare for that process.

With that, for today, I've finished my remarks and so, given that we're at a stage where no other members are quite ready yet to do their contributions, Mr President, I move -

That the debate stand adjourned.

Debate adjourned.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT (TARGETED REFORM) BILL 2026 (No. 10)

First Reading

Bill received from the House of Assembly and read the first time.

[5.01 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre - Leader for the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I move -

That the second reading of the bill be made an order of the day for Tuesday next.

Motion agreed to.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

[5.02 p.m.]

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre - Leader for the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I move -

That the sitting be suspended until the ringing of the division bells.

Sitting suspended from 5.02 p.m. to 5.12 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre - Leader for the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I move -

That the Council at its rising adjourn until 9.30 a.m. on Friday 15 May 2026.

Motion agreed to.

Ms RATTRAY - Before I move that the House adjourn, on behalf of certainly myself, and I expect all other members, I know the member for Mersey has already wished two fellow members of our Council family all the very best for their upcoming elections. Most of us have been in that position and sometimes it feels like it does not matter how hard you work and what you have done, you are never quite sure whether it has been enough. We sincerely want to see

you both, the member for Huon and the member for Rosevears, back in this place when we return proper. So, all the best, and I know that is heartfelt around the Chamber. A combined total of 10 years, six and four, so not a bad effort. Thank you.

Members - Hear, hear.

Ms RATTRAY (McIntyre - Leader for the Government in the Legislative Council) - Mr President, I move -

That the Council do now adjourn.

Mr PRESIDENT - Before I put the question, I would also like to wish the honourable member for Huon and the honourable member for Rosevears all the best for the upcoming election. I am sure that all members in this Chamber have the same view and all wish you the best for the upcoming election in a couple of weeks.

Greyhound Bill - Clarity Sought

[5.14 p.m.]

Ms THOMAS (Elwick) - Mr President, I rise on Adjournment to bring a pressing matter before the House to the attention of the government and pose a query following the unexpected events of today. Specifically, I am seeking clarity from the government, perhaps the Deputy Leader, regarding its intentions in relation to the Greyhound Racing Legislation Amendments (Phasing Out Reform) Bill 2025. As members would be aware, debate on this bill commenced in this Chamber last night, yet today, without notice or explanation, the bill was removed from the Notice Paper and not proceeded with. This raises serious questions not just for members of this House but for all Tasmanians with an interest in this issue. Only a matter of months ago, the government was asserting that this legislation was urgent, and we were told it needed to be progressed swiftly. The Legislative Council was asked to give it priority consideration, and yet today the urgency appears to have evaporated.

Ms O'Connor - You told us it was rushed.

Ms THOMAS - Whether one supports or opposes this bill, the way it has been handled is unsatisfactory. There are people across Tasmania whose livelihoods, communities and deeply held views are tied up in this legislation. They deserve certainty, they deserve transparency and they deserve to understand what comes next. I ask this government: does it intend to still proceed with its policy to phase out greyhound racing and breeding in Tasmania? If so, when will this bill be brought back on for debate and decision in this House? If not, what is its intentions, and if it can't advise us now, when will it?

This parliament should not be left in the dark on a matter of this significance. I call on the government to urgently advise this House and the Tasmanian community of its intentions.

The Council adjourned at 5.16 p.m.